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AMERICA'S DEFINITIVE COLLECTOR-CAR MAGAZINE

MARCH 2019 No. 174



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## Imported Importance

The design, style, and overall beauty is what has always attracted me to a particular automobile. It never mattered to me where the car was built; after all, what's the point? It's the car we admire, not the country in which it was assembled.

Appreciating and owning foreign cars doesn't make you any less of a patriot than someone who owns American cars, nor does it make you anti-American. That's all nonsense. True automotive enthusiasts don't care where a car is designed or built, or what badge is on its hood. We're only interested in the car itself—its shape, its performance, its enjoyment factor.

With those thoughts in mind, it gives me great satisfaction to know that, by including in *HCC* cars made in countries other than the United States, we now have the opportunity to create one of the absolute best car magazines America has ever produced. And we're going to do it.

When you're enthusiastic about automobiles, it's because you're interested in style and design, engineering and construction, appealing aesthetics and the act of driving itself. It's the combination of each of these elements that makes you want to own a particular car—not anything else.

Be it Detroit or Coventry, Lansing or Stuttgart, Dearborn or Turin, since the early 1900s many truly spectacular automobiles have emerged from these industrial cities. Automobiles that are so significant in their design that they are almost beyond compare. So, who wouldn't want to know more about them? I sure do, and always have.

Through the years I've had all sorts of cars, both American and foreign. To date, I've owned a Buick Electra; a Chevrolet Camaro; a Ford LTD station wagon, Escort and Tempo; five Pontiacs (a '56 Chieftain, two '61 Venturas, a '64 Le Mans, and a '84 Trans Am), and a Saturn that I bought new. But being mainly interested in sports cars most of my life, it stands to reason that many of the automobiles that came and went through the years were European.

As such, I've owned two Alfa Romeo 101-series Giulietta Sprints; a BMW 1600; five 2002s and one 320i; a Fiat 1500 roadster and a 124 Spyder; a Jaguar E-type Series 1 coupe; a

Lancia Appia convertible; a Mazda MPV; an MGA roadster; a new Mini Cooper a Saab 96 V-4; a Sunbeam Tiger 260; a Toyota Camry; four Volvo 240s and a 144; and a Volkswagen Squareback and a New Beetle. Oh, and 11 Triumphs.

My current crop of Triumphs includes a fairly rare 1955 right-hand-drive TR2, a '60 TR3A, '61 Herald, '67 GT6 MKI, and the first car I ever bought, my beloved '68 Spitfire MKIII. And right before Thanksgiving, I bought a second '68 Spitfire MKIII; I also have a '67 Austin-Healey 3000 MKIII. Unfortunately, because I have way too many on-going projects, I've recently parted with my '61 Ventura and '69 Camaro, but soon I hope

to buy a Corvair, followed by a '65 Buick Riviera. You see, for me, it's the car that matters, not whether or not it's built in the U.S. or Europe.

As much as I want to learn more about Packards, I also want to discover the mechanical details that have made Lancias some of the best-engineered cars the world has ever seen. I've long been fascinated by the air-cooled advantage of Chevrolet's Corvair, but so too about air-cooled Porsches, especially early 356s. Ford's retractable hardtop was pure mechanical ingenuity, as was Peugeot's 402 B of 1938. And if you admire the beautiful castings on Duesenberg and Miller engines, then surely you will also appreciate those alloy castings that adorn the engines of Alfa Romeo and Bugatti, Ferrari and Maserati.

In the coming months, we're going to profile these wonderful automobiles, and more. Through these features, we're all going to discover the engaging histories and mechanical compositions that have made them such celebrated vehicles. And with 2019 being the 115th anniversary of Rolls-Royce, we're going to honor many of the outstanding models created by Henry Royce. Like Henry Leland, Royce was a fastidious engineer whose primary goal was mechanical perfection.

With that said, keep in mind that *HCC* will always place a priority on American cars, and they will remain the backbone of this magazine. So, which cars would you like to see profiled in upcoming issues?



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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

## Washington Stumps for Route 66

**A PAIR OF U.S. SENATORS HAVE INTRODUCED A BILL TO DESIGNATE ROUTE 66**

a National Historic Trail, allowing the iconic road to receive long-term funding and facilitate its preservation. Senators Tom Udall (D-Utah) and Jim Inhofe (R-Okla.) introduced the legislation that replicates the House version of the Route 66 National Historic Trail Designation Act that was put forth earlier this year. Should it pass the Senate, it could wind up on the president's desk, cutting through a lot of the red tape of the earlier House version. At stake is a steady source of federal funding along the 2,400-mile route that opened in November of 1926, spanning from Chicago to Santa Monica.

## Duesenbergs on Display

**THE GILMORE CAR MUSEUM WILL**

celebrate one of the most beautiful Classic cars ever built with an exhibit for the elegant Duesenberg. Through the fall of 2019, expect to see roughly 20 Duesenbergs spanning the company's 16-year production run; some cars will be shown on a rotating basis. Among the highlights will be several

Model Js, including one with ties to Al Capone; Duesenberg-powered cars such as the 1935 Mormon Meteor, which was featured in *HCC* #39; and a rare Model A race car that is a perfect example of the advanced power and elegance of that time. For more information, visit [www.gilmorecarmuseum.com](http://www.gilmorecarmuseum.com).



DAVID LaCHANCE

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[www.ameliaconcours.org](http://www.ameliaconcours.org)

### 9-10 • Kyana Swap Meet

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### 9-10 • Chevy Corvette Expo

Galveston, Texas • 386-775-2512

[www.corvettechevyexpo.com](http://www.corvettechevyexpo.com)

### 14-16 • Norman Swap Meet

Norman, Oklahoma • 405-651-7927

[www.normanswapmeet.com](http://www.normanswapmeet.com)

### 15-16 • Chickasha Pre-War Swap Meet

Chickasha, Oklahoma • 405-224-9090

[www.pwsm.com](http://www.pwsm.com)

### 16 • VCCA Club Annual Auto Swap Meet

Houston, Texas • 281-468-9536

[vcca.site-ym.com](http://vcca.site-ym.com)

### 18 • Eastside A's Swap Meet

Macomb, Michigan • 586-206-6653

[www.model-a-ford.org/event/eastside-as](http://www.model-a-ford.org/event/eastside-as)

### 23 • Annual All Oldsmobile Show

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[mr442olds@cox.net](mailto:mr442olds@cox.net)

### 24 • Freeman's Super Sunday Swap Meet

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## Texas Packard Meet

**THIS YEAR WILL MARK THE 42ND EDITION OF THE**

Texas Packard Meet as it goes home to Salado, Texas, on April 5-7. The itinerary includes a Thursday night early-bird social and Packard games, followed by a Friday morning tour. The Saturday morning parade will march to the show grounds for the non-judged car show and swap meet, which will also feature seminars. Saturday will wrap up with an awards ceremony and banquet. The host hotel is the Holiday Inn Express in Salado. For more, visit [www.texaspackardmeet.org](http://www.texaspackardmeet.org).





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## Little Green Car

**AFTER WORLD WAR II, A GOOD NUMBER OF AMERICANS—INSPIRED BY THE** diminutive racers and roadsters they saw in Europe—decided to replicate the form with handbuilt specials using mostly American auto parts. Aside from Edsel Ford's hot rods, we've not really seen anything of the sort constructed before the war—until now, that is.

Mike Guffey emailed with these photos of a car he's long known about but only recently acquired out of a horse farm near Kinderhook, New York.

"When I first saw it, I thought it was something that had been built for children, but after getting it home, I am thinking it is probably a prewar homebuilt sports car maybe inspired by the MGs and Rileys being imported in the mid 1930s," he wrote. "It is based on a late '20s Whippet. 10'6" long and 4' wide."

But that's about all Mike knows about it. If anybody has seen this particular car—or knows of other prewar American-built specials—let us know.



## Custom Cord

**BILL KILE IN BOUNTIFUL, UTAH, HAS BEEN TRYING TO TRACK DOWN** information on the customized Cord he recently bought. Bill writes:

"The car is a 1937 Cord that has been customized, probably at two different times. The car started out as a 1937 phaeton with a rear seat. The original color was a light yellow/ivory. The first customization included the 'Darrin dip' in the doors, curved seat backs (another Darrin feature), side window profile modified with curved rear edge, removal of the rear seat, and installation-hinged rear deck cover over the rear seat area. A friend who has been in the auto restoration business for 40-plus years tells me the customization work is reminiscent of the late 1930s and early 1940s. This custom work was very professionally done. At some point in time after this customization, the car was painted a medium green. The second customization included dual exhausts, shaved door handles, and 'Frenched in' license plate on the trunk lid. I am guessing this work was done in the early 1950s. The car was purchased by a Norman Doyle in 1956 from a car lot in Burbank, California. He had the car painted black. The drivetrain is basically stock. The car was originally supercharged, but the supercharger was removed and the standard induction manifold installed sometime before 1956."


## RE: Oldsmobed

**WE'RE HAPPY TO REPORT THAT WE HEARD FROM** Rich Hentschel of Mundelein, Illinois, regarding the 1977 Oldsmobile Cutlass Special Edition that Joe Martin inquired about (see *HCC* #168). Rich is Gordon Hentschel's nephew and reports that his uncle, a Fisher body employee, did indeed build the pickup:

"The story he relayed to me was that, in order to save costs, the Cutlass was new and provided by Oldsmobile from a dealership after it had been crushed across the trunk by a utility pole that fell during a storm. The rear end came from an El Camino that had been wrecked in the front in a crash. He spent two years supervising the construction and indeed put a lot of time and effort into this vehicle. Oldsmobile liked the result but didn't develop the concept further. Instead, my uncle became the owner of the car and kept it for several years. He would proudly show the car at local car shows where he was often asked if it was a concept car. Everyone he spoke to thought so because of the meticulous craftsmanship that went into the car."

Thanks, Rich!



 Recently discovered a unique or noteworthy classic car? Let us know. Photographs, commentary, questions, and answers should be submitted to **Lost & Found, c/o Hemmings Classic Car, P.O. Box 196, Bennington, Vermont 05201, or emailed to [dstrohl@hemmings.com](mailto:dstrohl@hemmings.com). For more Lost & Found, visit [blog.hemmings.com/index.php/category/lost-and-found](http://blog.hemmings.com/index.php/category/lost-and-found).**

In addition, the Cord sports nose-mounted cooling vents and a continental-spare-type rear bumper, both of them modifications seen on other Cords.

After much research, Bill said he believes the car could have been customized at Vrooder's Custom Coach in Santa Monica, California; Coachcraft; or Bohman & Schwartz, though he has no proof for any of those hunches.

"We will enjoy the car without the history, but I find that knowing the history of the car adds to the enjoyment," Bill wrote. Hopefully somebody out there can fill in some of the blanks here.





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## Dallas Dealings

### LEAKE FINISHED UP ANOTHER DALLAS

auction last November, seeing more than \$6.4 million in sales and 260-plus cars finding new owners. Among the older American iron to sell was this 1959 Ford Fairlane convertible. It featured a 292-cu.in. V-8, automatic transmission, power steering and brakes, power retractable top, and pink leather and cloth interior. When the bidding ended, the Fairlane sold for an affordable \$20,000. Leake will have two auctions in Oklahoma this year before returning to Dallas next November. Check out Leake's website at [www.leakecar.com](http://www.leakecar.com) for more information.



## McCormick in Palm Springs

### MCCORMICK'S CLASSIC CAR AUCTIONS WRAPPED UP ITS 65TH PALM SPRINGS SALE THIS PAST

November with a total of 520 vehicles crossing the block. Of those, 334 were sold, bringing the sell-through rate to a healthy 64.2 percent, and total sales eclipsed the \$5.6-million mark. Among those cars that changed hands was this 1959 Chevrolet Corvette that featured a top-quality restoration. It was powered by a 245-hp/283-cu.in. V-8 and had both hard- and soft-tops. The final bid—and sale—for this solid-axle classic was tallied at \$70,875. For more details on this and future auctions, be sure to visit McCormick's site at [www.classic-carauction.com](http://www.classic-carauction.com).

## AUCTION PROFILE

<b>CAR:</b>	1959 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz Convertible
<b>AUCTIONEER:</b>	RM Sotheby's
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Petersen Museum, Los Angeles, California
<b>DATE:</b>	December 8, 2018
<b>LOT NUMBER:</b>	187
<b>RESERVE:</b>	None
<b>AVERAGE SELLING PRICE:</b>	\$225,000
<b>SELLING PRICE:</b>	\$324,000



**THE ELDORADO SUB-SERIES OF 1959 WAS** made up of the Seville hardtop, Brougham hardtop, and the luxurious Biarritz convertible. Only 1,320 Biarritz's were made this year, and what was viewed as over-the-top styling back then has become a symbol of Cadillac's late '50s power, luxury, and beauty that has become synonymous with the marque today.

This head-turner featured state-of-the-art items of the time including Autronic-Eye, heater, fog lamps, air suspension, and power everything.

The engine was the enlarged Q-code 390-cu.in. V-8 with three two-barrel Rochester carbs mated to a three-speed Hydra-Matic automatic transmission. The smooth black paint over red plush interior was nicely complemented by a white power top and sparkling aluminum trim that went well with the upholstery patterns. Showing just over 82,000 miles on the odometer, the rare and desirable Cadillac did not disappoint as it reined in an over-the-top price, proving that limited-edition luxury American cars from the '50s are still gaining in status.





# MARCH

## 2/28-3/2 • GAA Classic Cars

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855-862-2257 • [www.gaaclassiccars.com](http://www.gaaclassiccars.com)

## 7 • Bonhams • Amelia Island, Florida

323-850-7500 • [www.bonhams.com](http://www.bonhams.com)

## 7-10 • Hollywood Wheels

Amelia Island, Florida • 800-237-8954

[www.hollywoodwheels.com](http://www.hollywoodwheels.com)

## 8 • Gooding & Company

Amelia Island, Florida • 310-899-1960

[www.goodingco.com](http://www.goodingco.com)

## 9 • RM Sotheby's

Amelia Island, Florida • 519-352-4575

[www.rmsothebys.com](http://www.rmsothebys.com)

## 14-16 • Mecum Auctions

Phoenix, Arizona • 262-275-5050

[www.mecum.com](http://www.mecum.com)

## 29-30 • RM Sotheby's

Fort Lauderdale, Florida • 519-352-4575

[www.rmsothebys.com](http://www.rmsothebys.com)



## Amelia Island Preview

### FOUR AUCTIONS ARE SET TO TAKE PLACE IN

the northeast corner of Florida during the Amelia Island Concours weekend of March 7-10. RM Sotheby's, Gooding & Company, Bonhams, and Hollywood Wheels will feature cars of different eras and interests during the weekend. With tens of thousands of visitors, expect to see a lot of animated bidding and hundreds of vehicles finding new homes across the four auctions. For specific listings and information, visit [www.hemmings.com/blog](http://www.hemmings.com/blog) and [www.hemmings.com/newsletter](http://www.hemmings.com/newsletter) for centralized coverage.



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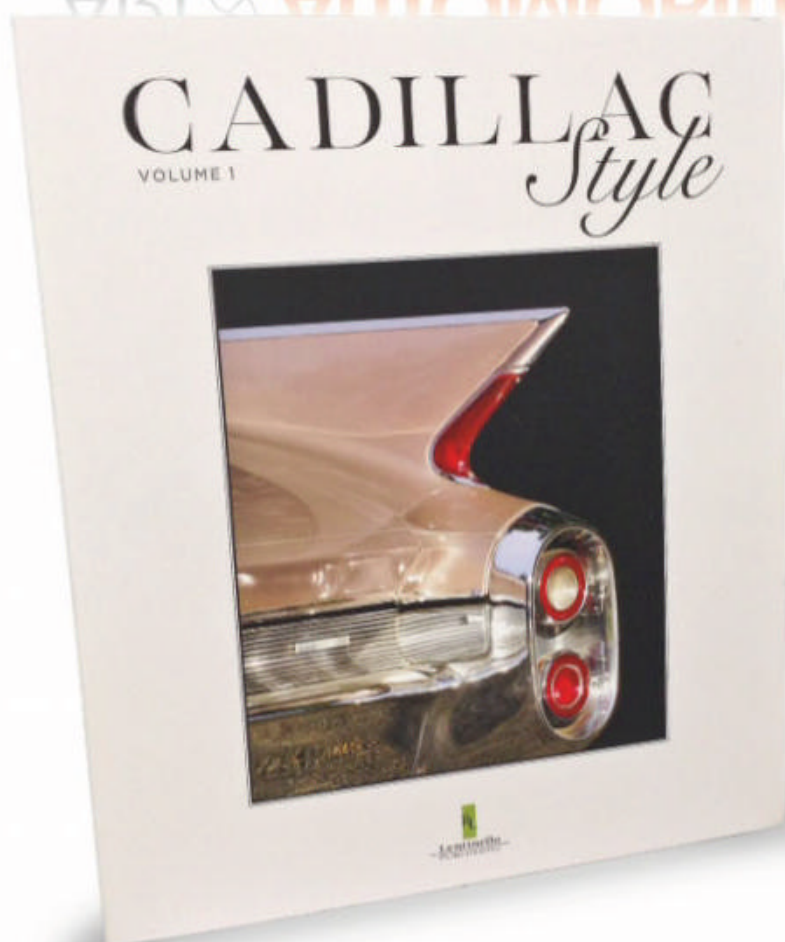
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## Cadillac Style

WWW.LENTINELLO.COM • CADILLACSTYLEBOOKS@GMAIL.COM • \$35 (PLUS \$3 S&H)

From its earliest days, Cadillac strived to offer the very finest automobiles that General Motors could produce. It was that aspirational quality that hooked *HCC* editor Richard Lentinello on the cars bearing the wreath and crest at a young age, and inspired the creation of his latest book, *Cadillac Style*. In the first of what promises to be a series of volumes on this subject, Richard takes readers through nearly 100 years of Cadillac and La Salle history, focusing on their design, engineering, and ownership experience by highlighting 27 restored and original examples that range from a 1909 Model 30 Demi-Tonneau to a 1993 Allanté. Each car gets its own chapter, which is handsomely illustrated with unique photography, and the text includes illuminating personal insights from the owners. This limited-edition 128-page softcover—each copy is printed in the USA on art-stock paper, and hand-numbered and signed by Richard—is a feast for the eyes.

## Sinclair Dino Clock

518-494-5544 • WWW.FILL-ER-UP.COM • \$159.99

Dino (pronounced Dye-no), the Sinclair dinosaur, is enjoying renewed popularity as the clever mascot for the 103-year-old oil company. This reproduction Sinclair Dino Gasoline clock (item LC 034) recalls similar examples from the 1950s, while offering modern, efficient design and construction. The tough, ABS plastic base is 14 inches in diameter, the colorful face is computer-printed with UV-stable ink, and the lens is optical-quality clear Lexan. This charming clock's quartz movement runs on a single AA battery (not included), while the on/off-switchable fluorescent light draws 110-volts through a standard wall plug. Dino will look great in your den or garage, and will give you a smile, as well as the time.



## 1956 Ferrari D50

585-292-7280 • WWW.CMCMODELCARSUSA.COM • \$527

Exquisite. No other words suffice when pondering this 1:18-scale model of the Ferrari D50 racer of 1956, created by the German firm CMC, Classic Model Cars. CMC has a premier reputation for its precision-built replicas, and this one honors the Scuderia Lancia-designed, Ferrari-refined Short Nose D50 that would be driven by Juan Manuel Fangio to Drivers' World Championship victory in 1956. The metal model (item M-180), built from 1,349 individual parts, features numerous opening/removable panels, a true-to-life rendition of the 265-hp, 2.5-liter V-8, genuine leather seat upholstery, stainless steel wheel spokes mating alloy hubs and rims, and, for display, a separate battery booster dolly and starting motor assembly. If you're a Formula 1 or Ferrari fan and have the luxury of ordering a justifiably expensive keepsake, this model is sure to become a treasured heirloom.





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this muscle car boasts an opening trunk and doors with detailed interiors. Dog-dish wheels and a 426 HEMI under the hood make this high-performance ride a true showstopper!

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## Radial Expansion

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## Thomas Midgley Jr.



**"BOSS" KETTERING OFTEN GETS THE** credit, or the blame, for two of the most infamous inventions of the 20th Century: the refrigerant R-12 Freon and the anti-knock compound Ethyl. The real name to associate with those discoveries, however, is Thomas Midgley Jr.

Midgley was born in Pennsylvania in 1889, but grew up in Columbus, Ohio. His father was an inventor (of, among other things, a pneumatic tire) and passed the inquisitive bug down to his son. Midgley Jr. attended Cornell where he earned a degree in mechanical engineering.

Within five years of graduation, Midgley was working at Dayton Engineering Laboratories (DELCO), a subsidiary of General Motors that served as the corporation's research arm (though each division also performed its own research and development). DELCO was best known at that time for the creation of the electric starter in 1912.

Experiments carried out by legendary British engineer Harry Ricardo during the First World War had revealed the susceptibility of high-compression aircraft engines to spark knock, an uncontrolled explosion

of the fuel-air mixture that sapped power and damaged the combustion chamber. At DELCO, Midgley began investigating the possibility of infusing ordinary "white gas" with additives to combat this undesirable knocking and make high-compression engines viable despite refinery technology largely unable to boost octane ratings above 60.

Midgley tested everything "from iodine to camphor to melted butter," in his quest for an anti-knock additive. He also tested methanol and ethanol, but in 1921 settled on tetraethyl lead. Kettering was nominally in charge,

and General Motors got the patent, but Midgley would become the face of tetraethyl lead. In 1922, Midgley was awarded the 1923 Nichols Medal by the American Chemical Society for his discovery.

In 1923, General Motors formed a subsidiary called the General Motors Chemical Company, with Kettering as president and Midgley as Vice President. DuPont Chemical Company was contracted by GMCC to produce the new "Ethyl fluid," which would be marketed to refiners to create new premium gasolines. The new product, however, was marked by a string of lead-related illnesses and deaths at DELCO, DuPont, and later at the GM/Standard Oil creation the Ethyl Gasoline Corporation. Midgley himself required a vacation to Florida to deal with the effects of his research.

Despite these warning signs, and the long-understood toxicity of lead, the public was repeatedly told that there was no danger from Ethyl gasoline. Midgley himself washed his hands with Ethyl fluid for reporters in 1924, stating that he was "not taking any chance whatever," in doing so. A major ad campaign encouraged motorists to "fill 'er up with Ethyl," and by 1940 octane ratings were consistently advertised in the 73 to 80 range thanks to lead.

After 1925, Midgley returned to the research side, leaving administration of GMCC to others. His task this time was to discover a safer alternative to the toxic, flammable, and explosive refrigerants then in use. He and his team discovered that dichlorodifluoromethane, a colorless, odorless, tasteless, nontoxic, and nonflammable gas, was a seemingly ideal refrigerant. They dubbed it R-12 and it was commercially named "Freon." GM's Frigidaire division was soon able to advertise the safety of its refrigerators, and it was Freon around which most automobile air-conditioning systems were built until the environmental dangers of CFCs resulted in them being banned in the 1990s.

Midgley's life after Freon was nearly as tragic as his legacy. While his discoveries made him famous and immensely well respected by his peers, he was stricken by polio in 1940. The inventive Midgley devised a hoist system to make it easier for him to get in and out of his bed. Unfortunately, he became entangled in it and strangled to death in 1944, at the age of 55. ☹





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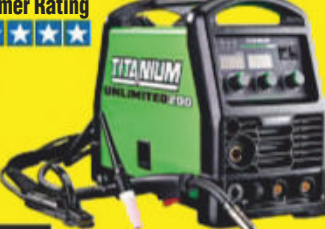
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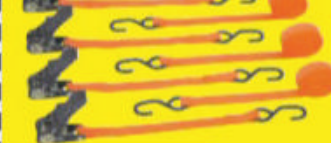
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## Miniaturized Monte Carlo



1979

### THE FIRST-GENERATION MONTE

Carlo delivered sportiness and flair in a tight package with just the right amount of personal luxury appointments, while the second-generation Monte Carlo wrapped us with florid lines replete with opera windows, vinyl roofs, and a luxurious interior. It was the embodiment of affordable personal luxury. Was this really a Chevrolet, or was it the poor man's Eldorado?

Which brings us to the third-generation Monte Carlo of 1978-'80, a personal luxury car in miniature, retaining all the necessary accouterments, while truly representing the times. The Colonnades were dead, but not forgotten.

The year before, GM's fullsize fleet was downsized to exterior dimensions that were marginally smaller than the Colonnades but with more interior volume. The following year, the world was made right again when the midsize

fleet lost inches and pounds. Naturally, the personal luxury coupes spent time at the same fat farm. Do they still have fat farms?

Introduced along with a new Grand Prix, Regal, and America's darling, the Cutlass Supreme, which continued to reign supreme in its new body, the Chevrolet was still distinctly a Monte Carlo—with its long hood, short deck, and distinctive lines—although slightly subdued.

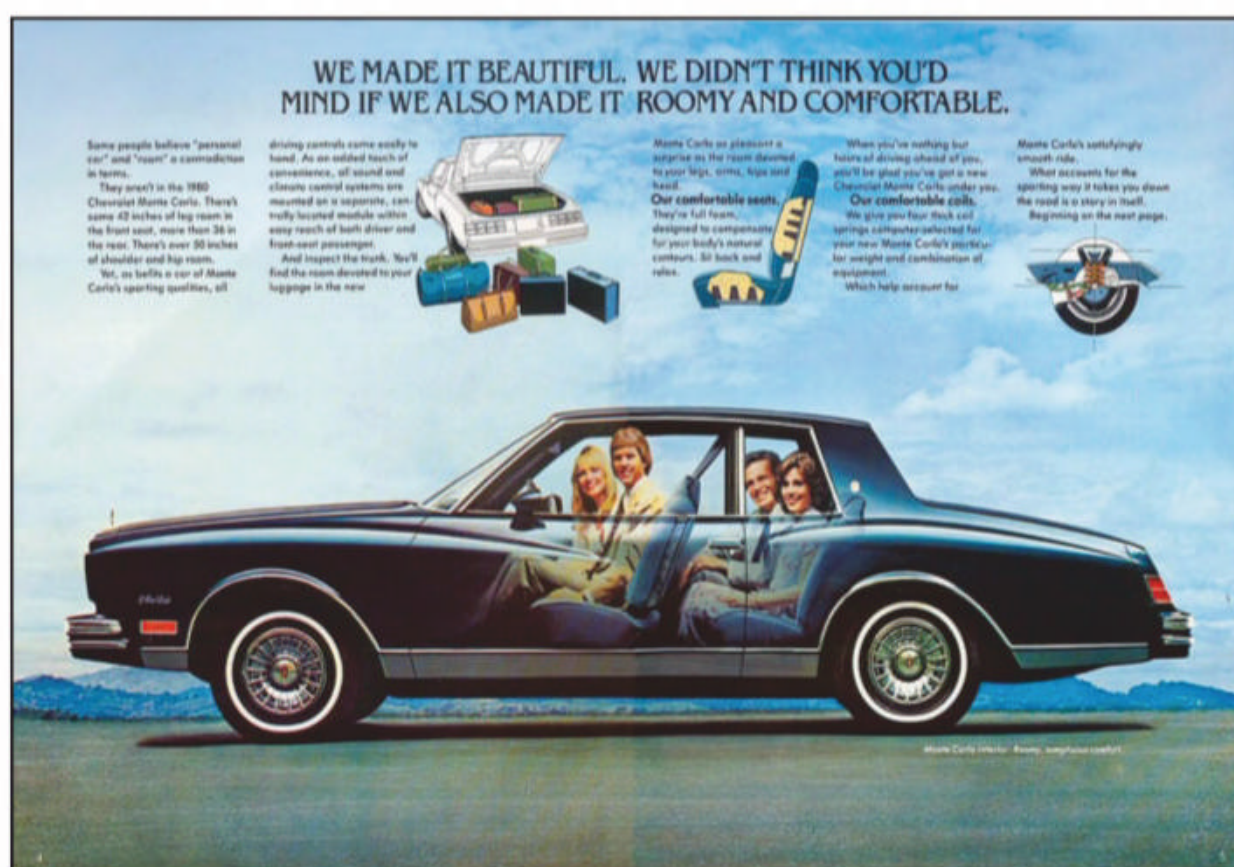
The wheelbase measured 108 inches, nearly identical to the first-wave Detroit compacts of 1960. From bumper to bumper, it measured 202 inches with a curb weight around 3,200 pounds—800 pounds lighter. Even more good news was delivered in increased interior volume and useable trunk space as well as improved visibility since the opera windows were more akin to quarter windows. All-in-all, a svelte package.

Standard power was delivered via a 231-cu.in. Buick V-6 or Chevy's own 305-cu.in. V-8, two engines with good reputations for durability and performance. A three-speed manual made a return appearance with the automatic optional. A four-speed manual could be mated to the V-8.

Chevrolet's 200-cu.in. V-6 became the standard engine in 1979, while the Buick V-6 retained its position in California. A 267-cu.in. V-8 was also available, offering 125 hp. The manual transmissions were still available, but this would be their last year in Monte Carlos.

For 1980, the automatic transmission became standard, while a Chevrolet 229-cu.in. V-6 was now the standard engine (except in California, of course). Optional was Buick's turbocharged 231 V-6 generating 170 hp.

The following year, the Monte Carlo was restyled again to look longer and lower on the same wheelbase, eliminating



1980



some of the squarish lines of this generation. Not surprisingly, I prefer the more formal 1978-'80 Monte Carlo, Cutlass Supreme, Grand Prix, and Regal.

Now, why should you consider this generation of Monte Carlo? Many reasons. These automobiles are very attractive and a pleasure to drive, thanks to smaller dimensions yet greater interior volume. You can pass a gas station without worry. They also represent a significant period in automotive history, answering consumer demands for more sensible proportions without sacrificing luxury and style.

So, what is out there?

I won't mention the 1978 Monte Carlo in baby blue with a white landau roof, and 300,000 miles (yes, you read that right) for \$6,500. Oh wait. I did mention it. Average retail is supposed to be around \$4,800, according to several sites. I also found one in nice condition for \$12,000 that has been for sale for more than a year. I think too many people watch auctions on TV and think their cars will fetch Lamborghini prices. Although in 2012, my tax accountant was given a beautiful, white 1980 Monte Carlo in lieu of his fee of \$1,500. I say he got quite a sweet deal, and he still uses it as his daily driver.

However, I have seen one or two on used-car lots on rural highways for reasonable cash, as well as the occasional clean and presentable 1978-'80 Monte Carlo sitting in front of someone's home with a "for sale" sign on the windshield.

The 1978-'80 Monte Carlo, an underdog that hasn't quite found its place in the collector-car world, but surely deserves a place in your garage. And if I still haven't convinced you, maybe the folks at Chevrolet, in 1978, can: "Chevrolet Monte Carlo: There's no other car quite like it." "There are many reasons to buy one:" "Personal luxury at an affordable price." "Easier to park and maneuver in traffic." "Road-tuned suspension with front and rear stabilizer bars." "14 noise isolating body mounts."

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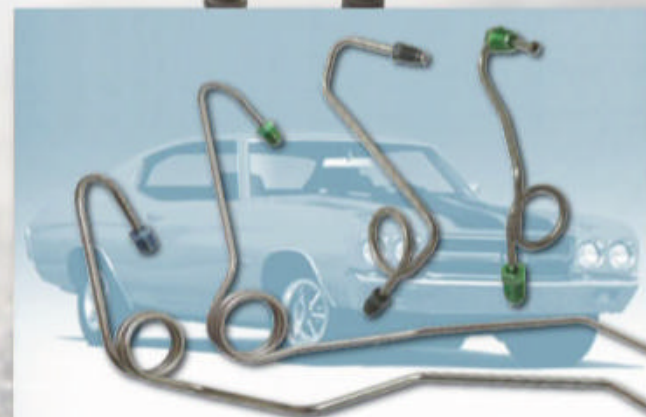
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# Preservation or Restoration?

*When should restoring overrule preserving originality?*

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

**A**lthough it's impossible to know the exact amount, unquestionably there's a finite number of original old cars left in the world. Being the custodians that we are, it is our responsibility to save as many original cars as we can and preserve them so future generations will be able to see firsthand exactly how these automobiles appeared when they rolled off the assembly line for the first time. Sadly, with each passing year the remaining number of original collector cars gets reduced; while some are destroyed in accidents, the majority of them are mainly ruined through unnecessary restorations.



A few scratches on the valve cover, minor peeling paint, and oil stains shouldn't warrant a repaint of an engine. This unrestored 1959 Edsel has a rare authentic-looking quality about it that would be erased if this engine were repainted. Keeping it clean is all that's needed.





Engine bays take lots of abuse, but just because the carb linkage shows some rust, the intake is discolored, and the surrounding factory-applied paint is dull, that doesn't mean it should be restored. Factory "OK" stamp markings such as these on a 1949 Chrysler need to be preserved as templates to ensure future restorations are performed correctly and accurately. Original washer bags must be preserved, too.



Factory-applied stickers and decals such as oil and lube, windshield registrations, I.D. cards, and instruction stickers like this trunk lid-applied jacking and radiator CAUTION decals are all part of a car's maintenance and ownership history; they can be quite revealing. Regardless of their condition, they all need to be preserved, adding to the car's character and authenticity.

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**If the exterior must be refinished, photographs need to be taken to document where and how the factory joined the body panels together.**



**Primer showing through the factory-applied finish does not justify new paint, rather it confirms the car body's integrity.**



**Although spilled gas has ruined the original paint on this 1939 Ford, repainting this area is preferable to a whole body repaint.**



**With so few 1956 Corvettes still sporting their original paint, the owner has chosen wisely to maintain this one in as-is condition.**

Thankfully, after way too many decades of unwarranted restorations and repaints, simply because the cars weren't "perfect" for their owners, that mindset has now changed. As a result, the fastest growing trend in the collector-car hobby is that of original cars. Call them what you may—"survivors," "unrestored originals," or "HPOFs"—any old car, truck, or motorcycle that retains the majority of its factory-applied paint, upholstery, trim, and mechanical components must be preserved in as-is condition.

Coined by the Antique Automobile Club of America, "HPOF" stands for historic preservation of original features, a class that has now become one of the club's most important and visually interesting. Prior to the AACA's adoption of the HPOF class, the National Corvette Restorers Society was probably the first major organization to realize the importance of originality. As a result of its quest to preserve as many unrestored Corvettes as possible, it has created two noteworthy awards: the "Chevrolet Crossed Flags" and the "NCRS Star and Bowtie." Each recognizes exceptional unrestored original Corvettes and their features that the NCRS deems to be "historically and educationally significant."

Another organization that's also determined to ensure the preservation of original collector cars of significance is the Historic Vehicle Association. Part of the HVA's mission statement reads: "As a society, we have an obligation to preserve these historic vehicles and related artifacts as a lasting record of our

progress. Through the collective efforts of enthusiasts, specialists, and professionals, the HVA aims to help ensure that our automotive heritage is more broadly appreciated and carefully preserved for future generations."

But the big question remains: When should an original car be preserved, and when should it be restored?

A car like the 1939 Pontiac featured elsewhere in this issue is no doubt a controversial example of whether a car like it should be preserved or restored; however, there's no doubt that you would be hard pressed to find a better specimen that showcases exactly how 1939 Pontiacs were originally manufactured. For instance, the worn away paint where the rear roof panel unites with the main body section reveals where and how those two body panels were joined, and how the seam was finished. The telltale traces of lead filler and the width of the seam are just a sampling of what authentic manufacturing details can provide for future restorers and historians.

These details, regardless of how inconsequential each might seem, are our only glimpses into the past. Each affords us the wonderful opportunity to study firsthand the way manufacturing techniques were carried out during America's previous decades of automobile production. By retaining a car's originality, we'll be better able to discover how the assembly line workers applied the paint, the upholstery was stitched, the carpet was bound, and the



wood was cut, shaped, and joined, and which types of fasteners were used for specific applications.

So, if a seat's upholstery has a split or is ripped, should that seat be redone using new fabric? Well, we guess it depends on the size of the damaged area. A few small rips are okay as long as the rest of the upholstery still retains its original colors and its pattern is clearly seen. However, if the upholstery is severely stained and ripped to the point where the stuffing and springs are showing, then reupholstering is the only alternative. But only the correct fabric will do, with the proper-size pleats and binding, and correct color stitching. Replacing upholstery with incorrect fabric must be avoided at all costs; if the correct fabric is no longer available, then the original, however poor its condition may be, should be retained.

The same thought process should be applied for preserving the interior woodwork, too. If the wood veneer isn't too badly cracked but it's lifting off the surface below, then it simply should be re-glued in position instead of being replaced with new veneer. The cracks give the wood character and are part of the car's history. The carpeting and headliner should be treated the same, and whatever trim is tarnished should instead be polished in lieu of new plating, which will look out of place in an interior that's mostly original.

The biggest challenge is always the paint. Preserving a car's factory-applied exterior finish is always preferable to new paint, even if the original lacquer or enamel is loaded with small chips, scratches, and a minor dent or two. If rust bubbles are present, then only that area should be repaired, with the new paint blended in. While some colors are harder to match than others, a less-than-perfect match is also preferable to a complete repaint. All too often today, cars are being restored using too much clearcoat, which makes them look like they are covered in a layer of plastic. Original nitrocellulose lacquers and even acrylic lacquers are no longer readily available, so if the paint is beyond saving, then only a single-stage paint should be used; although, if used properly, clearcoat can be undetectable.

Another issue regarding original paint is that many colors, such as reds, develop a dimness through years of exposure to the harsh sunlight. Oftentimes, this dull finish is difficult to restore, at least for the long term. Feeding the paint with restorative oils and other paint products will work, but you'll rarely be able to restore its luster like when it was first applied. Should that matter? Most preservationists feel that flat, original paint is preferable to shiny new paint simply because it's more authentic. Far more important is the simple fact that factory-applied paint empowers the car with an honesty that is highly desirable, as there's no accident damage or major body repairs to hide or cover up.

Keep in mind that a car can still be considered original if it's had just one door repainted, or perhaps the trunk lid was resprayed, or maybe just the lower portion of the quarter panel. Besides a car's interior and exterior, if its engine and surrounding compartment have been repainted and detailed, then the car is no longer original.

The whole point of preserving the originality of as many collector cars as possible is that unrestored cars are loaded with history, all of which is obliterated during the restoration process. Admit it, do we really need to see another flawless black Ford Model A, 1957 Chevy, or a perfect MGB that have been rebuilt to conditions far superior to when they were new, when battle-scarred original versions are so much more interesting and historical to look at?

Yet the biggest problem facing the collector-car hobby when it comes to original cars is that many people still don't understand the true meaning of the word "original." Just because a car has never been "restored," that doesn't qualify it as being original if it



**Minor staining of tonneau covers (top) is preferable to reproductions so we can see how the factory had them sewed when new. Minor tarnishing doesn't mean replating of emblems is a necessity. Factory markings on this 1956 Corvette's rear axle must be preserved to assist future restorers in getting their restorations right. Original tires should be kept for authenticity purposes but never used on the road because they're not safe. "Display only" is the key phrase here.**







**If the original fabric is no longer available, it's preferable to maintain the original upholstery regardless of a few tears, rips, or stains. But if the fabric is badly ripped and springs are poking through, then reupholstering with material as close to original is the only alternative.**

has been repainted. Unrestored, yes, but certainly not original.

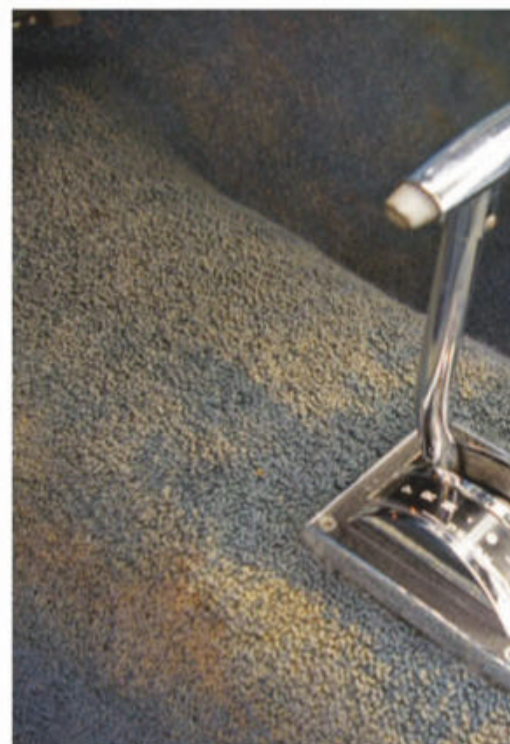
So, how many changes and how much deterioration can a car have and still be considered original? More importantly, at what point is an original car worthy of being preserved in as-is condition, versus an original car that really can benefit from a thorough restoration? Well, it all depends on the actual car itself, as each is different.

When a car's body is damaged by excessive corrosion—even if it's still covered in its factory-applied paint—for the sake of saving that car from total deterioration, there might be no other option but to repair the body and apply new paint. Same goes for the engine compartment, especially when battery acid corrodes the metal below; if not repaired in a timely manner, the rust can spread and cause additional damage to the surrounding area. Better to have a car restored than to have no car at all.

In addition to preserving as many unrestored cars as we humanly can, we must also take the next step in authenticating original production methods by creating restoration manuals and guidelines, as some clubs have already started doing. Yes, it's a huge undertaking, but if we don't record these findings, then how can cars be restored in the future in the most correct and authentic manner possible?

Knowing which parts were painted and which were left in bare metal is just as important as knowing if a part was painted in gloss black or semi-gloss. Was the original carpeting bound in fabric or leather? Were the headlamp bezels plated in chrome or nickel? Was the interior wood made of cherry or bird's-eye maple? Was the wiring loom covered in fabric or vinyl tape? These are all significant details that are important to know and do correctly when a car is being restored.

Back to the 1939 Pontiac shown on this month's cover, what would you do if you owned this all-original beauty: preserve it or restore it? And why? 🐾



**Discolored and stained carpeting can be re-dyed if you prefer to keep the interior's original integrity.**

**Dashboards with minor paint chips have far more character than those that are repainted. Torn inset door panels can be replaced, but only with the correct material.**







Tarnished trim pieces like door handles can be easily polished to look new again, while the dings and dents on original sill plates add to a car's authenticity and character. Worn rubber floor mats and stained trunk floor mats, if they're original to the car like these mats are, must be preserved to show future restorers not only their exact design and texture, but how they were fitted.

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✓Yes

xNo

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# Spring Special

*De Soto's tagline, "Styled for Tomorrow," certainly applied to its 1955 Fireflite Coronado*

BY DAVID CONWILL • PHOTOGRAPHY BY TERRY SHEA

**T**he start of a new model year used to be a BIG deal. Each fall in the 1930s, '40s, '50s, and '60s, new-car dealers would smuggle in the next year's models in the dark of night, stage them carefully on the showroom floor, and embargo any view of them before a certain date. Then, sometime in September or October, and amid





much fanfare, the new-and-improved models would be revealed to the public. The result was many potential buyers physically on-site to view the new cars and (hopefully) a desirable front-loading of sales.

The flip side of this, naturally, was a lull in off-the-street customers and thus in sales about midway through the model year. Roughly, this coincided with the end of winter, and it gave rise to “spring special” models that usually consisted of newly introduced paint and trim to give some of the “new-and-improved” luster back to models with which the public was already very familiar.

De Soto was a brand that needed any help it could get. Perpetually stuck between sales-powerhouse Dodge and corporate-namesake Chrysler, De Soto was squeezed from both sides. The division’s low-end Firedome models (which had been the high-end in 1954, when the six-cylinder Powermaster was still in the lineup) were only \$50 more than the line-topping Dodge

Royal Lancer, and the standard Fireflite, which was De Soto’s own, newly introduced, top-of-the-line model, was actually over \$60 more than the equivalent Chrysler Windsor. The division saw styling and engineering as a way to distinguish itself.

As a point in De Soto’s favor, one thing a prospective Windsor buyer did not get in the bargain was a hemi engine, as Chrysler division had replaced its flathead straight-six engines with a Poly-spherical “Spitfire” V-8 making 188 hp from 301 cubic inches.

For 1952, De Soto had introduced its own hemi-headed V-8, distinct from Chrysler’s 1951 “Firepower” hemi. By 1955, that engine had grown from 276- to 291-cu.in. thanks to an increase in bore size from 3.625 inches to 3.72. Stroke remained the same at 3.344 inches. Power, meanwhile, grew from 160 hp in 1952 to 200 hp in the 1955 Fireflite. Firedome models, with a two-barrel carburetor, made 185 hp from the same displacement.

In the same time period, De Soto transmissions had gone





The leather-trimmed interior, inspired by the Sportsman two-door hardtop, is perhaps the memorable element to the Fireflite Coronado.

from semi-automatic “Tip-Toe shift with Fluid Drive” to a modern, fully automatic two-speed PowerFlite in 1954. For 1955, the new transmission was controlled by a “Flite Control” selector lever protruding from the vinyl-topped “dual-cockpit” dash. The famous Mopar pushbuttons didn’t arrive until 1956. A column-shifted three-speed manual remained the base transmission, and overdrive was available as well.

Stylistically, De Soto had to make do with bodysells and a 120-inch wheelbase shared with Chrysler. This cut both ways, though, as it allowed the division to share in the corporation-wide “100 Million Dollar Look” restyling, where the last vestiges of the K.T. Keller era were purged by Virgil Exner. Longer, lower, and wider were the order of the day, and the aggressive new styling themes were harbingers of the Forward Look to come. Period brochures repeatedly assure the reader that the new De Soto is “barely five feet high.”

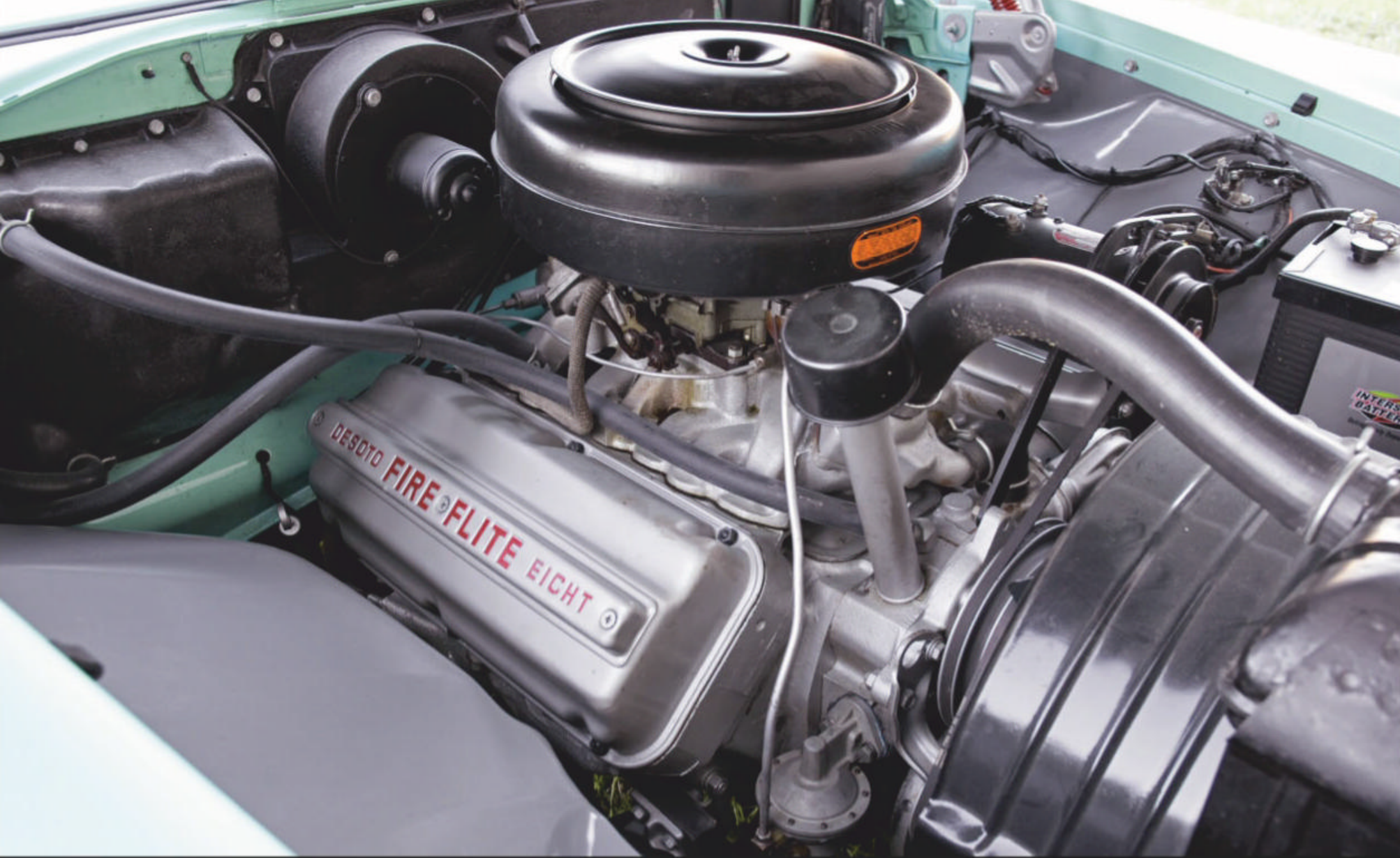
Jack and Cindy Johnson, of Madison, North Carolina, own this 1955 De Soto Fireflite Coronado four-door sedan, said to be one of around 500 Fireflite Coronados produced for 1955. The Fireflite Coronado was a new edition of 1954’s Firedome Coronado,

introduced in the spring of that year, which was a two-tone (Sahara Beige and Cadiz Blue—buyer’s choice of location) Firedome with special badging and a unique Pacific Blue interior. The Fireflite Coronado introduced the world to one of the cultural icons of ’50s automobilia—the three-tone paint scheme.

All Fireflite Coronados were four-door sedans and were finished in three-tone paint schemes—the package cost \$172 on top of the Fireflite sedan’s \$2,727 base price. Some may have been painted bright green with a Surf White top and a black sweep (the “sweep beauty panels” that permitted a third color were standard on Fireflite convertibles and Sportsman hardtops, but optional on the sedan), but most were Coronado Green, Black, and Surf White. Those opting for Coronado Green, Black, and Surf White were able to select where the three colors were applied—upper, lower, and inside the sweep—making for six possible combinations. Fireflite Coronados also received special badging as such.

The Fireflite Coronado was more than just paint and exterior trim, too. Inside are special white-leather trimmed seats with Coronado Green fabric inserts and a smattering of black to match the exterior—standard Fireflite sedans got silky nylon upholstery instead. Fireflite





Sportsman hardtops also received leather, but in a substantially different design from the Coronado. Power windows, power seats, two different types of radio, and air conditioning were all available options in any 1955 De Soto—though you won't find them on this car.

Major options on this De Soto include "Sun Cap" chrome windshield trim that also acts as an exterior visor, the PowerFlite automatic transmission, and a heater. This makes the 1955 model especially unique, though, because the Fireflite Coronado came by default with every available option standard and this particular car was ordered with nearly all those options deleted. Jack doesn't know why the car was ordered this way but speculates that it may have been a performance-minded buyer who didn't want a lot of power-robbing equipment hobbling the hemi engine.

Jack toyed with reintroducing one of the deleted options, power brakes, along with a disc conversion up front, but ultimately after enough time behind the wheel has elected not to. "The more I drive it, the more secure I feel about the brakes." Jack does all his work himself, and certainly was up to the task, but ultimately decided that the damage to the De Soto's originality was not worth the minor improvement.

Don't look for power steering anytime soon, either. "I love the non-power steering," Jack says, "It really connects the driver to the car. The car floats." Speaking of floating, operating the car is a sensation Jack describes as "freeing." To hear him talk about it, the whole thing is much akin to time-travel back to the Eisenhower years.

You enter the car by operating the De Soto's unique "push-pull" door handles, which remain flush with the surface until pushed—then they pop out to be pulled. The "family-size" doors were, as De Soto described them, "gateways" to the roomy interior. With bench seats front and rear and no seatbelts, this isn't a car you want to autocross, but that's not the point of a vehicle like this. This is one of the first generations of vehicles built with cross-country travel in mind. It's a perfect denizen of the upcoming (in 1955) Interstate Highway System.

At highway speeds, Jack notes that the car is very happy, citing "plenty of power, smooth shifting, smooth ride, and lots of thumbs up," and also reports that holding a conversation in a normal tone of voice is completely possible. "If the windows are up, you don't have a bit of trouble."

He says gripping the big steering



Under the hood of all Fireflites and some Firedomes was the four-barrel, 200-hp, 291-cu.in. hemi V-8. Sparton horns had been a staple of Mopars since the Maxwell days.







I started out with a 1940 De Soto and now I've actually got four of them. What I wanted was something different when I went to car shows, and normally when I go, I've got probably the only De Soto. A lot of people have never seen a De Soto. They want to know who it was made by. They always ask a lot of questions about it. In our De Soto club there is just a handful of Coronados. There are only a very few '55 De Sotos anyway, and most of those are not Coronados. We just love taking this car anywhere we go—sometimes we take two De Sotos, and my wife always wants to drive the '55.

wheel and “floating through time” brings to mind such mid-century accoutrements as “pearls, a fur stole, and a pillbox hat.” As an added incentive to rack up the miles, the De Soto, despite its hemi V-8 and automatic transmission, still knocks down a respectable 15 mpg.

That ride is courtesy of Chrysler Corporation's legendary mechanical engineering prowess. While the Airflow debacle of the 1930s may have scared away Chrysler from cutting-edge styling, the company had retained an unerring focus on quality design. By the 1955 model year that encompassed chassis features like Oriflow tubular shock absorbers, mounted out back in the “sea-leg” style; “Cyclebond” brake linings in “Safeguard” hydraulic brakes; and tubeless tires mounted on “Safety-Rim” wheels, designed to retain the tire in the event of a blowout.

The Johnsons acquired the car in April 2016 from the widow of a National De Soto Club of the Carolinas chapter member Mack George of Laurens, South Carolina. With her blessing, they have nicknamed the car “Jeanette” in her honor. Jeanette and Mack restored the car to its present state, a task for which Mack was well suited, as his father and grandfather owned the longest-running De Soto franchise in South Carolina—in fact, this car's serial number is very close to a Coronado originally sold through the family dealership.

“We've got a ‘thing’ for De Sotos,” Jack says, “And this one is a beauty! Of course, the color combo is a real eye-catcher. The mid-year sales stimulator ‘Coronado Edition’ makes her rather

rare—we've been told less than 500 were made. We've also been told that De Soto was first to manufacture a tri-tone car.”

That color scheme, especially the green, is what Jack and Cindy like best about the De Soto. “Everyone loves it,” Jack says, “The pastel-y ‘Coronado Green’ is quintessential mid-’50s.” They also love the beautiful white-leather-trimmed and green-fabric interior “And,” Jack adds, “Of course that gorgeous grille and chrome.” The toothy De Soto grin, a brand hallmark since 1941, was making its final appearance in 1955.

With the Georges having done such a bang-up job in restoring and preserving their De Soto, the Johnsons have had to do nothing to the car and they intend to continue in that vein, telling us they just want “to maintain Jeanette and Mack's preservation and take her out, share her, and enjoy her!” To that end, they put about 500 miles a year on the car, getting it out three or four times a month. As members of both the AACA and the National De Soto Club, the Johnsons have had the car out at numerous shows, including local ones, where the '50s appeal of the car has racked up an impressive array of hardware.

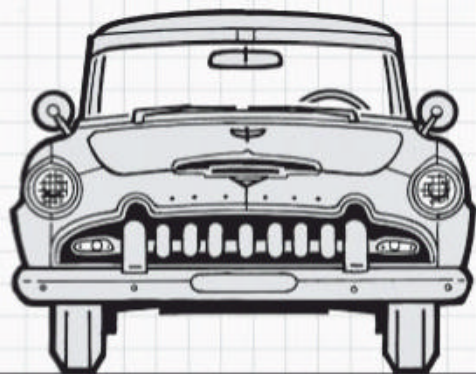
If you aren't sure 500 annual miles are enough, be aware that the Johnsons own four other De Sotos: a 1940 Custom Business Coupe, a 1940 Custom Sedan, a 1955 Fireflite Sportsman, and a 1959 Firesweep Sportsman. “If we'd known how much pride, fun, and wonderful like-minded friends these cars would bring, we'd have gotten them much sooner! ‘Old’ cars and the folks that love them are great!” 🐾



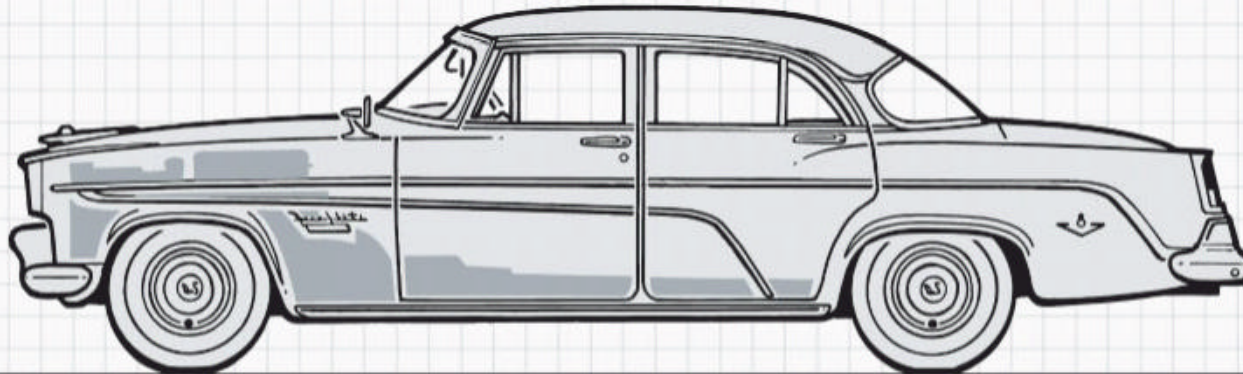


# 1955 DE SOTO FIREFLITE CORONADO

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RUSSELL VON SAUERS,  
THE GRAPHIC AUTOMOBILE STUDIO © 2019 HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR



60.2 inches



126 inches

## SPECIFICATIONS

### PRICE

BASE PRICE	\$2,727
OPTIONS (ON CAR PROFILED)	PowerLite automatic transmission, heater, radio, wide whitewall tires, sun cap visor, Coronado package

### ENGINE

TYPE	OHV V-8
DISPLACEMENT	291-cu.in.
BORE X STROKE	3.72 x 3.344 in
COMPRESSION RATIO	7.5:1
HORSEPOWER @ RPM	200 @ 4,400
TORQUE @ RPM	274 lb-ft @ 2,800
VALVETRAIN	Hydraulic valve lifters
MAIN BEARINGS	Five
FUEL SYSTEM	Carter 2210S WCFB four-barrel carburetor
LUBRICATION	Full-pressure
ELECTRICAL	6-volt
EXHAUST	Dual, cast-iron manifolds

### TRANSMISSION

TYPE	PowerLite two-speed automatic with torque convertor	
RATIOS	1st	1.72:1
	2nd	1.00:1
	Rev.	2.39:1

### DIFFERENTIAL

TYPE	Hypoid, semi-floating
RATIO	3.54:1 (3.36:1 and 3.73:1 optional)
DRIVE AXLES	Live axle

### STEERING

TYPE	Three-tooth roller, manual
TURNS LOCK TO LOCK	5.5
RATIO	26:1

### BRAKES

TYPE	Four-wheel drum
FRONT/REAR	12 x 2.5 in

### CHASSIS & BODY

CONSTRUCTION	All-steel body on separate perimeter frame
BODY STYLE	Four-door, six-passenger sedan
LAYOUT	Front-engine, rear-wheel drive

### SUSPENSION

FRONT	Independent; coil springs, tubular shock absorbers
REAR	Rigid axle, leaf springs, tubular shock absorbers

### WHEELS & TIRES

WHEELS, FRONT/REAR	15 in; stamped steel
TIRES, FRONT/REAR	7.60-15

### WEIGHTS & MEASURES

WHEELBASE	126 in
OVERALL LENGTH	217.9 in
OVERALL WIDTH	78.3 in
OVERALL HEIGHT	60.6 in
FRONT TRACK	60.2 in
REAR TRACK	59.6 in
SHIPPING WEIGHT	3,395 lb

### CAPACITIES

CRANKCASE	5 qt
COOLING SYSTEM	23 qt
FUEL TANK	20 qt
TRANSMISSION	12 qt (incl. torque convertor)
REAR AXLE	3.5 pt

### CALCULATED DATA

BHP PER CU.IN.	0.69
WEIGHT PER BHP	16.98 lb
WEIGHT PER CU.IN.	11.67 lb

### PRODUCTION

TOTAL	26,637 Fireflite sedans
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## PROS & CONS

- + 200 horsepower
- + Limited production
- + Orphan name with Chrysler mechanicals
- Parts can be hard to find
- Four-door style not as desirable
- Limited support, unlike other Chrysler brands

## WHAT TO PAY

### LOW

\$4,000 – \$8,000

### AVERAGE

\$13,000 – \$16,000

### HIGH

\$21,000 – \$25,000

## PRODUCTION

1954 Firedome	45,095
<b>1955 FIREFLITE</b>	<b>26,637</b>
1956 Fireflite	18,207

## CLUB CORNER

### NATIONAL DE SOTO CLUB

1323 West Beach Road  
Oak Harbor, Washington  
98277

[www.desoto.org](http://www.desoto.org)

Dues: \$40/ year

Membership: 1,000





# Preserved Pony

*An early-built, unrestored, 17,000-mile, original-owner  
1965 Mustang convertible*

BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO • PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

**A**t the New York World's Fair on April 17, 1964, Ford launched the Mustang, which has since become an automotive legend that remains in production today. It was sporty and affordable, and it arrived just as an influx of baby boomers were entering the new-car market. Dealerships were inundated with customers, and the resulting orders totaled 22,000 that first day.





There was also a barrage of print and TV ads, the covers of *Time* and *Newsweek* featured Ford Vice President, Division General Manager, and champion of the Mustang Lee Iacocca, a Tiffany Award for “Excellence in Design” was received, and more. In May, the Mustang paced the Indianapolis 500.

Though it featured conventional engineering primarily from the Falcon, the Mustang excelled in styling with its modern long-hood/short-deck theme, taut lines, trim measurements of 181.6 inches long and 68.2 inches wide, and bucket seat interior. Optional equipment could further define its character as sporty, economical, or luxurious. The initial production run offered a coupe for \$2,368 or a convertible for a couple hundred dollars more. A fastback would arrive in September.

A 101-hp 170-cu.in. straight-six engine was standard; a 164-hp 260-cu.in. two-barrel V-8, a 210-hp 289-cu.in. four-barrel V-8, and the 271-hp High Performance 289-cu.in. V-8

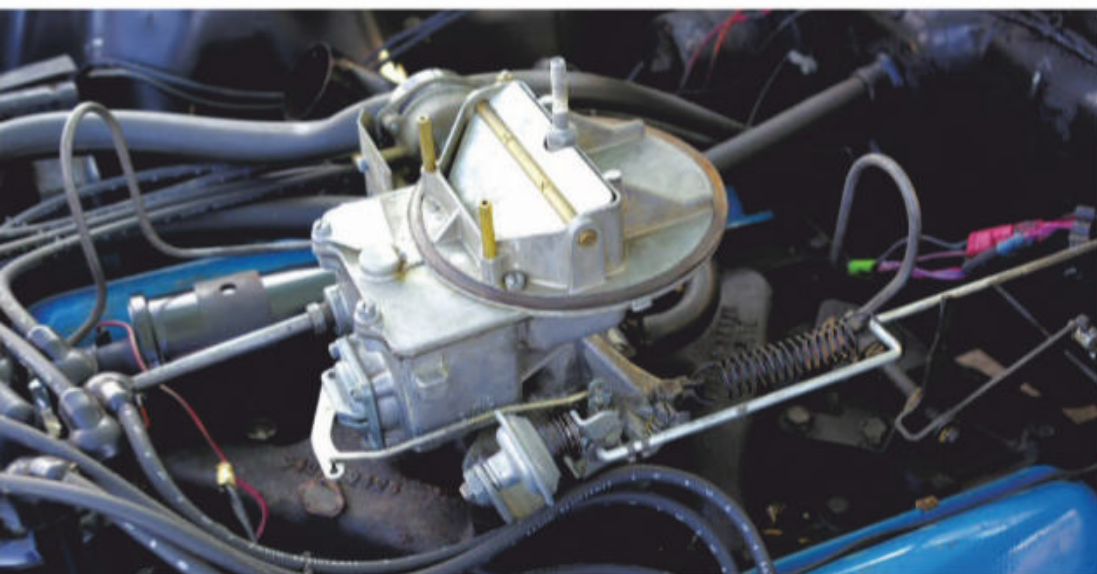
were optional (the latter was not released until June of 1964).

A floor-shifted three-speed manual was standard with a four-speed and three-speed Cruise-O-Matic at extra cost, and there were a few restrictions regarding which transmission could be ordered with which engine. Various rear gear ratios were matched to the powertrains.

The 108-inch-wheelbase “platform construction” chassis of the Mustang employed an “Angle-Poised” front suspension with ball joints, strut-stabilized lower arms, coil springs and shocks mounted on upper A-arms, and an anti-sway bar, as well as recirculating-ball-type steering. In the rear were longitudinal semi-elliptic leaf springs and diagonally mounted shocks.

Those Mustangs powered by V-8s employed 10-inch drum brakes and five-lug wheels, while the six-cylinder-powered cars had 9-inch drums and four lugs. Standard were 13-inch wheels and tires with 14s optional. To say that the Mustang was a suc-





**The 260 two-barrel engine was offered in the '64½ models (a designation used by enthusiasts). This example is original.**

cess would be an understatement, considering Ford sold more than 418,000 of them from April 17, 1964, to April 17, 1965, and the extended model year still had months to go.

Imagine being 18 years old in the spring of 1964 as Mustang mania was heating up, but you were cruising the streets of Mayfair on the northeast side of Philadelphia in a Volkswagen. Ron Hermann can: "It was nearly new, but I still couldn't get any girls to ride in that VW. They just didn't like it."

Though Ron is quick to admit that memories from over 50 years ago have faded, what follows are his best recollections from April 1964. "When I saw a billboard advertising the brand-new Mustang, I decided I had to have one, so I rushed home to tell my dad. He played golf with the owner of Robert Barr Ford in Philadelphia, so we drove over to the dealership and put a \$100 deposit down on a Skylight Blue convertible. I almost had a heart attack, I was so happy."

However, Ron would have to wait to take delivery, because the Mustang was needed for promotional purposes. As he re-



calls, it was displayed at different local agencies as well as on a rotating platform in the showroom at Barr. The Mustang served as a show pony for weeks, so Ron regularly frequented the dealerships to guard it and, in so doing, instructed a few customers not to touch his car.

He explained that in one instance, a man offered to pay him \$500 for the paperwork Ron had received when he put down the \$100 deposit to hold the Mustang. "I refused, but noticed that he repeatedly examined the VIN, which gave me the impression that this Ford must be special for some reason, so I'd better take good care of it."

Finally, in May of 1964, Ron and his mother, Thelma, completed the deal and took delivery of the Mustang. The lone surviving document, aside from the title, is the Ford Registered Owner Plan dated "5-9-64." Also listed on it is code "08D," which provides the scheduled build date of April 8. Ron related that the car was in his mother's name initially because he was still too young to buy it.

He immediately hit the streets of Philadelphia to make lasting memories in his sporty new convertible, which was equipped with the 260-cu.in. V-8, Cruise-O-Matic, and 3.00-geared differential. It also had optional power steering and top, padded visors, AM radio, HD battery, Deluxe wheel covers with knockoffs, Deluxe seatbelts, and 6.95x14 white sidewall tires.

Within a few months he met his future wife, Gail, when he offered to give her a ride. Ron remarks, "I probably never would have gotten her to go out with me had I not had the Mustang." They've been happily married since 1968.

Ron pampered his Mustang from day one since he always had a second car to serve as a daily driver, and he swears it has never seen rain or snow. He kept the Mustang in a heated garage under multiple car covers and would drive it periodically early on. By the late 1960s, however, he'd stopped taking it out, and it would remain in storage for about four decades.

Over those years, Ron advanced to foreman in the Steamfitters Local 420, and he and Gail raised two children in their Feasterville, Pennsylvania, home. He reveals, "Neither my son nor my daughter have ever been in the Mustang because I didn't want to risk getting into an accident. When they reached driving age, however, I bought them each a car, so they didn't have to drive this one."

Upon moving to a new home around 2008, Ron retrieved his pony car from storage and sent it to the Mustang Barn in Souderton. He wanted to get it road ready and was concerned that an engine rebuild might be warranted due to the nearly 40





**The interior and all the upholstery are original. The passenger seat is fixed, and the carpet doesn't have a toe pad like the later cars.**

years of storage. The entire car was examined and serviced, and a borescope was inserted through the spark plug holes to check the cylinder walls. Though a new exhaust system was required, fortunately, an engine rebuild wasn't.

According to Ron, his Mustang remains original from its paint to its drivetrain, interior, top, and even its Firestone tires. "I used to shine the tires with my dad's shoe polish and I think it helped to preserve them," he explains. "I only had the top down a few times, and it was up while in storage, which helped keep wrinkles out of it. I used a polish on the vinyl backlite that was made for vinyl windows used on boats."

Ron's Mustang has features that are unique to the early cars. Despite the fact that all Mustangs from the start of production in March of 1964 through the end of the 1965 model year have a "5"

to denote 1965 leading off the VIN and are all considered 1965 models, Mustangs built from March to mid-August of 1964 are commonly referred to as 1964 1/2 models by enthusiasts. One reason why, aside from the fact that they were introduced prior to the traditional model-year start, was that there are differences between them and the '65 cars built after mid-August of 1964.

A mere sampling of the many aspects of the '64 1/2 models that would change for the traditional 1965 model year include replacing the 170-cu.in. straight-six engine with the larger 200-cu.in. six-cylinder, and the 260 V-8 with a two-barrel 289; the generator gave way to an alternator; large horns in the engine bay became smaller ones on the radiator support; the distributor no longer used the oil wick that was on most '64 1/2s; battery cooling vents were no longer in the radiator support; the "A" on the vent knob that most 1964 1/2 models had was removed; door lock knobs color-keyed to the interior used in many '64 1/2s became chrome; the leading edges on the hood were refined from what many '64 1/2s had, and the headlamp bucket housings were revised in that area.

Given the exceptional state of preservation of Ron's Mustang, the America On Wheels Museum in Allentown invited it to participate in its "Pony Cars: Then and Now" exhibit in 2017 alongside the unrestored 1963 Ford Mustang II concept and other pony cars. Ron agreed, but ever the protector, with memories of fending off handsy onlookers in the showroom back in 1964 and again in 2012 at a car show, he required assurance that his Ford would be roped off, so people couldn't touch it.

Now 73 and retired, Ron is content to maintain his 54-year-old piece of Ford history for the foreseeable future. He relates, "I'm amazed that I was able to keep it for as long as I did." Pleased with the America On Wheels Museum experience, he predicts, "When I die, my Mustang will go to a museum, so people can see how these cars used to be built." It's a fitting future for a remarkably well-preserved early Mustang convertible. 🐎



**The original Skylight Blue paint, convertible top, and Firestone tires are still with this well-preserved Mustang.**







# Incomparable Indian

*Few cars make the case for preservation as well as this 1939 Pontiac Deluxe Six*

BY DAVID CONWILL • PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

Collecting low-mileage original cars makes a lot of sense. A restored car never seems to quite capture the quality of an original factory build when it comes to the feel of the chassis, drivetrain, and even the fit-and-finish of the body. Something is always compromised or not quite right. Don't get us wrong—restored cars are still loads of fun to drive and well worth owning, they're just not the same.

But what about cars that are unrestored but aren't low-mileage? Or, regardless of mileage, cars that are no longer mechanically perfect? Take the 1939 Pontiac Deluxe

Six shown here. It's unrestored, sure, but it has hardly lived a pampered life. Its patina was earned the hard way—first by usage and then by sitting, exposed to the elements, for a couple decades in the back of a used-car lot.

It's not the car's fault. The first owner, an instructor at what is now Penn State, certainly loved it—he kept it and eventually passed it down to his son. The son may have been less excited about it. Flathead Pontiacs, especially six-cylinder, four-door sedans, were great transportation and handsome to boot (just look at that Silver Streak running up the grille and onto

the hood), but they're not the stuff most collectors spend long hours dreaming about. That may explain both why the son sent it off to the dealership and why nobody rushed in to buy it when its Saturn Gray paint was still intact.

Nor were the mechanicals of this car somehow immaculate. When current owner Joseph Bruno, of Abington, Massachusetts, first found it via his local internet classifieds, it ran—but just barely. The first fellow who rescued the car from its long back-row tenure got the engine freed up and running, but what would prove to be a 3/16-inch ring gap meant that it was hardly





Fog lamps on the front were added to serve as turn signals (the taillamps were modified for the same purpose). The engine was overhauled in the car by the owners and the Carter W-1 carb was expertly rebuilt by a tech advisor for POCI. Trim tag says that the paint that remains is the original color.



the best representative of the new engines coming out of Pontiac back in 1939.

Likewise, the clutch and brakes were not up to snuff, though they did allow the car to move and stop. There was no sense of this being effectively a new car with a layer of oxidation disguising its mechanical perfection. It was just a well-worn old car that needed some help. Joseph, along with his father James, son Riley, and daughter Emily, has given it just that. Its mechanicals are getting better all the time, but Joseph and James won't be restoring the cosmetics—and a lot of people wonder why.

"The first thing people ask," Joseph says, "Is 'You drove that thing here?'" That provides perhaps an inkling of the Pontiac's appeal in itself: the sheer shock value of something that looks like a junkyard refugee motoring around without issue. Many will claim we've reached "peak barn find" when it comes to the appeal of worn-out looking vehicles, but the prolonged success of the rat rod movement and the way it has spawned "fauxtina" finishes (new paint applied to look old) over the past 20-some years implies that there's something to all







No radio here, but this style steering wheel was an optional extra that was intended to reduce driver fatigue. The carpet, mohair upholstery, and door cards are all original and still holding up. Ashtrays in the rear seat were typical luxury touches in the 1930s. Wiper knob dangles below the dash, but a replacement piece has since been located.



this. A car's wear tells its story, to remove it may obliterate its soul.

Joseph provides some further insight along these lines: "As they say, it's only original once. This car is like a time capsule from 1939. It simply can't be duplicated by restoration." There is a sense of history, then. The "time capsule" aspect isn't in providing a pure 1939 experience, but rather immersing onlookers (and the occupants of the car in particular) in all the history the car has experienced from 1939 to the present. The original mohair interior is a special focal point for this, as it's where you spent your time when the vehicle was underway. "It has the usual wear and tear and rodent damage one would expect for a vehicle this age," Joseph says, but "For a 79-year-old interior, it's really not that bad."

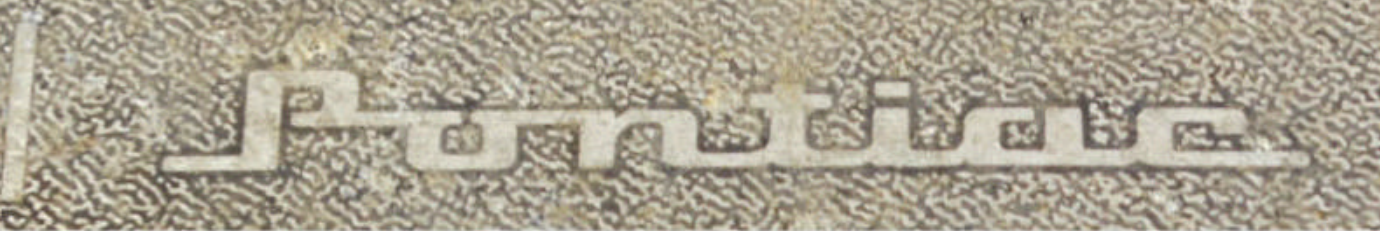
That sense of history that pervades the car makes it fun to speculate about its life from new. When did the first owner buy the car? Was it in the fall of 1938 when the new models came out? There was a recession the previous year, so the industry didn't move many 1938 cars, but 1939 would prove better. Maybe he heard the news from Europe, where Germany, Poland, and Hungary had just gotten finished dismembering Czechoslovakia; or China, where the Japanese Army was running amok essentially uncontrolled by the civilian government in Tokyo. With war clouds on the horizon, owning a new car might make sense.

The 1939 Pontiacs came out in October of '38—was he frightened by Orson Welles' Halloween-eve broadcast of *The War of the Worlds*? We know he didn't hear it in the car—there's no radio. Did the Pontiac haul the first owner's family to see *The Wizard of Oz* in the summer of '39? Or to see *Gone With the Wind* at Christmas?

Perhaps the biggest entertainment of 1939, at least on the East Coast, was the New York World's Fair. In addition to attractions like General Motors' World of Tomorrow display, or television, the owner of a Pontiac like this one might have been thrilled to spot a clear-bodied version of the car on display there, showing off all the period technology packed inside—"Knee-Action" front suspension, "Duflex" rear springs, and the column-mounted "Safety Shift" shifter.

Safety Shift, especially, was a point of pride for Pontiac, as column shifting first appeared on 1938 Pontiacs and was adopted essentially industry wide for the 1939 model year. While the 85-hp 223-cu.in. L-head straight-six engine was hardly cutting edge,





it was quiet compared to OHV engines, and solid and reliable. With the “Scotch Mist” intake manifold introduced in 1937, it promised good fuel distribution and, as the name implies, thrifty operation.

When the Brunos acquired the Pontiac, the engine came up for help first. Although running, it quaffed lubricant at an unreasonable rate. “Oil consumption,” Joseph recalls, “was up to a quart every 50 miles. Compression had dropped into the 70-psi range, and finally a valve got stuck open.” Happy with a patinated appearance but not with equivalent mechanical maladies, the Brunos set out to rebuild the engine. Surprisingly, they did not remove it from the car first, instead electing to leave it in place while completely reconditioning it internally. It helped that no overbore was required.

That rebuilt engine, however, quickly claimed the original clutch. Restoring that component raised as many challenges as rebuilding the engine. The bane of a Pontiac from this era seems to be parts availability—they’re out there, but not on the same level as Chevrolet and Ford parts. While they did manage to find everything required for the engine, the Brunos struck out when it came to a new clutch. Instead they turned to an equally time-honored solution: A rebuild.

In the 1930s, the answer to vehicular issues was, often as not, to rebuild parts rather than replace them. While clutch-and-brake shops, like starter-and-generator rebuilders, aren’t as common today as they once were, they’re still out there.

James found one and sent off the Pontiac’s clutch disc for a rebuild. It came back good as new.

That kind of repairability is a key to the appeal and longevity of a car from this era. “The Pontiac engineers did a wonderful job over-designing this awesome piece of machinery,” Joseph says. “Everything was designed with serviceability in mind, unlike today’s cars. There must be 50 grease fittings and oil caps on every moving part.” The simplicity of design also aids in keeping the car going even in the absence of replacement parts, with the Brunos fabricating those items that aren’t available.

That kind of do-it-yourself ethic extends to some subtle, sympathetic modifications that make the car more useable in today’s driving conditions. To avoid perplexing other motorists with hand signals, for example, a pair of period-correct fog lamps were installed up front, along with dual-filament sockets in the taillamps, all of which were wired up to serve as turn indicators. Likewise, seatbelts were added for when Riley and his sister Emily are along for the ride—something Riley has decried as “killing the vibe” on the car he has dubbed “Oldie.”

New brake linings for improved stopping may be in the cards for *Oldie* and potentially an overspray of low-gloss clearcoat to stabilize the oxidized finish, but other than that, don’t expect any further changes. As the man said—“You can’t duplicate this experience by restoration.” 🐾

*The Pontiac engineers*

*did a wonderful job*

*over-designing*

*this awesome piece*

*of machinery...*







## My “New” Renault

A few moths ago I wrote about my first car, a rusty, dusty 1961 Rambler American that I loved. Today I want to tell you about my last car.

It’s a 1984 Renault Alliance. Yes, I realize that’s probably a disappointment to some folks, but I bought it for three very valid reasons: I had purchased a new 1984 Alliance when my daughter was born, because we needed an economical family car. It’s an AMC product that was built in the company’s Kenosha, Wisconsin, plant. It was only \$500—and reasonably close to where I live.

There’s actually another reason that I hesitate to admit: I love foreign cars almost as much as I love American cars. Especially French cars. Yeah, I know they’re troublesome and quirky, but I can’t help myself. I love the ride and I embrace the weirdness.

I never belonged to the “I hate foreign tin” crowd, because I used to wrench in a foreign car shop and came to appreciate the finer points of imports. Also, I’ve owned many. A quick mental count tells me I’ve had at least 10 vintage foreign cars, including three Saabs, two Renaults, an Audi, MGB, TR-4A, Karmann Ghia, and a brick-red Austin America I wish I still owned. It was a hoot to drive.

I have certain rules about buying old cars, and one is that they have to run and drive before I’ll buy them. This Alliance wouldn’t start when I looked at it, but I managed to get it running. However, every time I put it in “Drive” the engine stalled, so I didn’t get a chance to drive it. I probably should have walked away at that point but, love is blind, so I bought the thing.

It’s a lower level “L” model—one step up from the base car—with automatic transmission, power steering, and factory A/C, so it has everything I wanted. The body and chassis are in good shape with no rust, and the interior is excellent. The paint is supposed to be a pretty dark blue, but apparently the previous owner was unaware that car wax had been invented, so it’s now a mix of very dull blue and chalky white. I’ve compounded a small area, and there’s

a chance the paint can be rubbed out to an acceptable shade. Time will tell. In any event, its going to take a lot of finessing.

Okay, so now I’ve got it running and driving, but the big problem is it seems to be stuck in third gear—it’s a three-speed automatic—yet also seems to have a top speed of 30 miles per hour. I took it to my local transmission shop and, not surprisingly, they parked it for two days then told me it needs extensive repairs. I asked if they tried adjusting anything, but they claim it’s a sealed unit. Hmm, that’s not what the book says.

I’d love to pitch right into fixing it myself, but right now I’m struggling to meet deadlines for two new books and several magazine articles, so all I can do is put some Marvel Mystery Oil in the gearbox

and run it around for a while with the hope that whatever is stuck works itself free. That idea came from a former AMC/Jeep/Renault service manager. After I try that, I’ll drain and refill the transmission with fresh fluid, replace the oil and anti-freeze, and park the darn thing until I have time to work on it. If it ends up that I have to replace the transaxle, I probably will, even though the car will never be worth anywhere near what it’s going to cost to restore. And if the paint won’t rub out, I’ll spring for new paint, too.

Why would I do that? Because this little Renault is basically a decent old car that needs a little love and a lot of dollars to get it back in shape. I’m not rich, but I don’t drink, smoke, or gamble, so I can justify blowing a few bucks on a project that interests me. I just hate to see an old car in good physical condition get junked because its financially unsound to spend any money on it. I really want to save this little Alliance. And I want to enjoy driving it when its finished.

And, of course, if I’m successful in getting this car back in shape I’m probably going to be the only Renault Alliance owner at any car show I go to. I like that feeling.

By the way, when I said this is my last car, I mean it’s the last car I’ve bought so far. I’ve got my eye on a beautiful Rambler Classic that, with luck, I’m going to add to the fleet soon. 🐞



//  
Yeah, I  
know they’re  
troublesome  
and quirky,  
but I can’t  
help myself.  
I love the  
ride and I  
embrace the  
weirdness.  
//



## I'VE BEEN GOING TO HERSHEY OFF

and on since 1975 when the swap meet field was flooded and "rivers ran through it." What I would change? I would add more seating areas, as we're all getting older, and more toilets for the same reason. I would eliminate the selling of buck knives, T-shirts with skulls printed on them that say, "Kill them all, let God sort them out" and all Elvis, Betty Boop, James Dean, Marilyn, and other 1950s nostalgia nonsense, and no stupid "cry baby" dolls. I've never understood the reason for either of those. No political shirts or bumper stickers. I would eliminate anything non-car related such as any kind of dolls, toys, model trains, lamps, furniture, and so forth. There is a swap meet that doesn't have any of the things I've mentioned, but it's not in the U.S.A.

To experience a show way better than Hershey, try the Beaulieu Autojumble in the U.K. every September. In actual acreage, it's slightly smaller than Hershey, but is laid out in a more compact way with little wasted space. English-bodied American cars? British cars of all types and all parts for them? Right-hand-drive Model A Fords? Bugatti parts? Do you need semaphores? Brass headlamps? It's all there. Having said that, they do have some non-automotive items, like one year there was a propeller from a 1910 Bleriot monoplane, a Rover gas turbine, and what model trains they do have are generally live-steam powered. Any restoration service is represented, such as wooden body-frame builders, white-metalling of engine bearings, upholsterers, chrome platers, you name it. If you've never been to Beaulieu, go!

Larry Lewis

*Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

## I JUST READ RICHARD'S COLUMN

about Hershey in *HCC* #172, and I couldn't agree more. I've been restoring old cars since I was an 18-year-old kid back in 1974, so I looked forward to Hershey every year. I remember one year arriving at Hershey around noon on Wednesday. We walked the rest of the day, then all day Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, and still didn't get to every booth! All the vendors were there the whole time; no one packed up and left.

I hadn't been to Hershey in about 15 years. Then last year my son needed parts for a rat rod he is building. I suggested we go with some friends to Hershey to search. None of them had ever been there before,

and we eagerly made the trip. Everyone had to work that week, but we managed to leave early Friday morning and arrived at Hershey around noon. We started walking the fields and most of the vendors were all packed up or in the process of packing. Tons of spaces were empty, and lots of spaces simply had cars parked in them. When I inquired, I was told that lots of old timers still had their spots but didn't sell things any more. They just parked their cars in their vendor spaces to make it easier to walk the field!

When we got there at 8 a.m. Saturday, there were almost no vendors left at all—it was a ghost town! We were all disappointed and went home with almost nothing. So, while my son still needs parts to finish his rat rod, he wouldn't go to Hershey again this year because he thought it was a waste of his time.

If you're going to have the premier swap meet and car show that draws people from all over the world (and you want them to come back again), then all the vendors need to be there right to the end. And, yes, get rid of all the parked cars and condense it. If you're not selling and displaying stuff, you don't deserve a vendor space.

The AACA should also have a website where vendors can go in advance and enter information about what parts they have for sale. Anyone could print out a list of, let's say parts for a 1949 Ford, and know what spaces to head to first instead of just wandering around the fields looking.

Larry McKeough

*Averill Park, New York*

## ALTHOUGH I TOO ADMIRE THE FACT

that the AACA's Hershey Region does a fantastic job of putting on this event year after year, I too would probably be considered as a fellow "bad guy." I had attended the Hershey Fall Meet from 1964 through 2014 originally as a vendor, then a vendor "helper" with a group of six from Ohio. During the 50 years I attended, I witnessed the expansion of the flea market from the single blue field to multiple fields, and the car show location moved from the interior of the stadium for brass cars with the more modern show cars on a practice field adjacent to the stadium, to the entire show in the parking area north of the stadium, to today's venue on a former golf course.

During my last few years at Hershey, I found it difficult to "pound the pavement" to cover all the vendor spaces in all the

various fields and noted that, by late Thursday or Friday morning, many vendors had left, particularly if the weather became cold and rainy. The locations of the car corral and the Saturday car show from our vendor location added extra walking distance and unfortunately became a challenge to all of our group, young and old. I do feel that Richard's "Bad Guy Suggestions" have merit. Relocating the car show to a more central flea market location might encourage more vendors to remain for the entire four days.

Morgan Taft

*Chagrin Falls, Ohio*

## I AGREE WITH RICHARD ON A LOT

about Hershey. I've been attending since I was 12 years old with my parents in the early '70s and haven't missed a year. That includes the year in the late '70s with the hurricane that had porta-potties floating, and half-tracks pulling out vehicles from the mud. Now my wife and son go every year.

But the one trend that bothers me the most is the early withdrawal of the vendors. When I was only able to go on Saturday, I was glad it was the biggest day. Now, if you only go on Saturday it's hardly worth the ride. I don't claim to know the answer, but I wish an incentive to stay open could be implemented. The car show alone is not enough to keep people coming out.

Dave Wilbur

*Monroeville, New Jersey*

## HOW ABOUT PUTTING RESTRICTIONS

on the hundreds of golf carts that threaten pedestrians? Who attending Hershey has not had to step aside for a speeding golf cart only to see the occupants hop nimbly out and trot over to see something that got their attention? Each year I marvel at the AACA's and Hershey Park's inattention to the danger presented by incompetent or rude golf cart drivers; both entities must have wonderful insurance coverage to be able to allow this situation to exist. Regulations on golf cart use are apparently in place but are clearly not being enforced.

My recommended change: No golf carts without a physician's approval for a named individual based on a physical need.

Jerry Johns

*Tallahassee, Florida*

*Continued on page 45*





...might

reasonably

priced, high-

performance

four-doors be

the next hot

collector cars

down the

road?



## Four-Door Hot Rods

What is it about four-door variants of any make or model that garners so little respect? Does their familiarity breed contempt? Is it because so many are seen as taxicab, police, or fleet vehicles?

With the continuing market for high-performance cars inevitably based on two-door models, what's a manufacturer to do to create a high-performance car when there are no two-door models in its line on which to build such an offering?

That question was answered by three high-performance V-8, rear-wheel-drive, four-door models: The 1957 Rambler Rebel, the 1994-'96 Chevrolet Impala SS, and the 2003-'04 Mercury Marauder.

Although these are exclusively four-doors, it's a safe bet that several of them are in the garages of a few *Hemmings Classic Car* subscribers.

"All new" 1956 Nash Ramblers were one of few models of any make to post a sales increase in 1956 over 1955. But for reasons unknown to even AMC authority and *HCC* columnist Pat Foster (we discussed it), those Ramblers were only offered as four-door hardtops, sedans, and station wagons.

That product planning oversight may be one reason 1957 Rambler Rebels are often overlooked when high-performance cars of the late 1950s are discussed, and sometimes ignored in debates as to who marketed the first muscle car. After all, its 327-cubic-inch V-8 (no relation to Chevrolet's later 327) was developed for larger, heavier, sedate Nash Ambassadors. However, the 327 V-8 was exclusive to Rebels in the 1957 Rambler line; in fact, it was the only engine available in them.

The 1957 Rebel 327 was to feature the futuristic Bendix Electrojector electronic fuel injection system, but it's unknown how many, if any, were so equipped. The official number is zero, but rumor has it that as many as six may have escaped from Kenosha; none of which have apparently survived. Rebels so equipped would have been rated at 288 hp, whereas the four-barrel versions were rated at 255 hp.

The Rebel's performance was not lost on road-testers of the day, however. The April 1957 *Motor Trend* featured what we would today call a muscle car shootout among what it identified as the 13 hottest cars of 1957. Among them were a

fuel-injected Chevrolet Corvette and Bel Air, a supercharged Ford Thunderbird and Fairlane sedan, a Chrysler 300-C, a Studebaker Golden Hawk, an Oldsmobile J-2 Rocket, and an AMC Rambler Rebel. The Rebel's impressive 0-60 time of 7.5 seconds was bettered only by the Corvette's 7.0-second dash.

Ironically, we must jump over the 1960s, '70s, and '80s, to introduce the other two four-door, high-



performance cars: the 1994 Impala SS and the 2003 Marauder. The reality that no two-door models were available on the rear-wheel-drive platforms under those cars undoubtedly accounts for why they were developed as four-door models.

By the time those newer Impala Super Sports and Mercury Marauders were brought to market, their high-performance engine and transmission combinations, and sophisticated suspensions, had been refined during police use, making it easy to source their underpinnings from existing parts. That left money to spend on exteriors and interiors to create unique high-performance cars for the general public.

Both cars featured model-specific tires and wheels and individualistic styling cues with subtle graphics: body-color "Impala SS" scripts on each Impala quarter panel, and "Marauder" pressed into the Mercury's rear bumper cover. Those subdued elements offered a refreshing contrast to the increasingly bold graphics on vestigial high-performance cars of the 1970s, where graphics were enlarged in inverse proportion to engine size and power.

As I was finishing this column, GM joined Ford and FCA by discontinuing most four-door sedans. Remember when collectors didn't pay much attention to station wagons beyond genuine woodies and specialties like Chevrolet Nomads? In light of *all* station wagons now experiencing profound popularity, might reasonably priced, high-performance four-doors be the next hot collector cars down the road? Never say never! 🏁



## SINCE THE EARLY 1990s, I HAVE BEEN

going to Hershey and agree with many of Richard's points. Sadly, I too have noticed the drop off in the number of actual vendors, the quiet encouragement of filling empty spaces with parked cars, along with fewer sellers being present each day as the Meet progresses, even if the weather is pleasant throughout the week.

On the other hand, I have witnessed the gleam in the eyes and joy on the faces of friends when they first see each other, whether in the car corral, the fields themselves, or any of the local hotels/motels and restaurants. I have overheard wonderful stories recalling youthful adventures along with treasured parts found in earlier visits mixed with the latest news on grandkids, attended classic car shows/parades, vacation trips, and other "life" updates. They all relate to the fact that not only have many of the attendees gotten older, but the vendors we would revisit each year for hard-to-find parts themselves no longer attend due to retirement or passing on.

Individual and specialized vendors were the backbone of the Meet. Whereas in the early years I could go to any number of vendors (both Mopar-specific ones as well as those with specific parts—just brakes, etc.) to find a good selection of different parts for my car, I am now down to one vendor who I visit each year to pick up a set of wiper blade refills.

Maybe some of your suggestions (consolidation of fields, movement of the Saturday car show, etc.) will be incorporated with the recent announcement of the westward expansion of Hershey Park and building of a new roller coaster stadium.

Michael Dabrowski  
Pennington, New Jersey



## REGARDING DAVID CONWILL'S

column in the December issue (#171), I have attached a photograph of our prize-winning attire from an event in the early 2000s. Although the outfits may not exactly match time-wise to our 1956 Packard, most people were too young to know the difference. My wife, Joan, has bobby sox and saddle shoes with her poodle skirt over the proper petticoats. Notice the angora sweater and rhinestone rimmed glasses, too. My outfit consists of highly polished engineer boots, black peg pants, black leather jacket, and white T-shirt. I even purchased a pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes to roll up in my left shirt sleeve while strolling around with my jacket flung over my right shoulder. Unfortunately, my hair wasn't long enough to form a legitimate DA. Still it was a fun event.

Rich Walters  
Eagleview, Pennsylvania

Continued on page 47

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## The Myths of 1942

It's Pearl Harbor Day as I write this, and in reading some of the many commemorations of the U.S. entry into World War II, I think about some of the confusion that surrounds the 1942 model year—and the war years in general.

Probably the first thing to come to mind is the model year itself. Many people seem to think that 1941 was the last year of civilian auto production before things switched to defense production “for the duration.” That's not true, of course. The 1942 models had been in production since the late summer of 1941 and first became available in the fall. By December 7, 1941, there were many 1942 cars on the roads already.

The War Production Board ordered a temporary halt to new-car sales in January 1942, but even then, assembly continued (as it had in 1917-'18). The end of production only came in February, when most car factories were converted to producing military matériel. Civilian trucks kept coming through March 3, 1942, and would resume in a trickle in 1944, with even more coming in 1945. The existing stockpile of new cars would be parceled out over the duration when and if a buyer could justify one.

Nor is “blackout trim” a characteristic shared by all 1942 models. Even that name is a misnomer. The painted trim on late 1942 models (those produced after January 1, 1942) was a result of strategic restrictions on chromium and stainless steel, not some fear that Luftwaffe bombers would somehow home in on Detroit because of too much shine. Ask yourself if glossy paint would have still been used if that were the case. In fact, plating continued to be allowed on bumpers.

Strategic limitations on materials began even before Pearl Harbor. Buick, for example, had to switch to iron pistons in its 1942 models from the outset. With those changes, along with the peacetime draft that began in September 1940 and the increasingly militaristic themes found in automobile marketing (“Fortress Gray,” “Fleet Blue,” and “Scout Brown” were just three of several 1941 Chevrolet colors named in the same vein),

it was becoming increasingly clear that America was to play a large role in the war now raging in Europe and Asia—either directly or as an “Arsenal of Democracy,” a term popularized by President Roosevelt in 1940.

Gasoline rationing began here in the Northeast in January 1942, but most Americans didn't have to go beg indulgence from their local Office of Price Administration board until that December. Not that there was a real shortage of gasoline per se, but rather the gas rationing along with the national 35-mph speed limit were seen as necessary to curtail using up precious tires. With Japan having cut off access to most of the world's rubber supplies, tires were probably the single biggest scarcity stateside—although food rationing was likely a bigger issue for most folks, day-to-day.

The gas-rationing system was front and center for most Americans when they thought of the OPA. In fact, one popular saw had the board's initials translated as “Only a Puny ‘A’” card, a reference to the base sticker that allowed drivers to purchase three to four gallons of gasoline per week. Suddenly, folks who had purchased diminutive Bantam, Crosley, and Willys cars looked very clever indeed. Those who ran a business or car pooled with fellow war workers were permitted a “B” sticker that got them up to eight gallons per week. “C” stickers went to doctors and other essential occupations. Trucks received a “T” sticker and motorcycle messengers got an “M.”

Perhaps the most coveted (and abused) sticker of all was the “X” sticker, which entitled the owner to unlimited fuel purchases. In theory, these were for a very limited few people who required regular use of their automobile. Travelling salesmen is the category most often associated with legitimate use of an X sticker, but some 200 congressmen were exposed as having obtained X stickers without justification.

Scandals and black marketeers notwithstanding, Americans did their part. They grumbled over shortages, sure, but they also felt a sense of inclusion. Making the family car go to war, whether it was an old jalopy, something fuel-efficient presciently purchased, or a brand-new '42 model (with or without “blackout trim”) was just one small part of the sacrifices that built the largest anti-fascist force the world has ever seen. 🐼



The War

Production

Board ordered

a temporary

halt to new-

car sales in

January 1942,

but even then,

assembly

continued...





**HEMMINGS CLASSIC CAR IS MY** favorite publication, and nit-picking is like telling someone all that is wrong with his car at a car show. Nothing can be 100-percent correct, especially when the history is 100 years old and you are dealing with several authors and deadlines, etc. as well as for a car that sold 15-million units. For clarification only, the 1925 Model T pickup shown on page 56 in *HCC* #172 is really a TT (Ton Truck introduced in 1917), not the 1/2-Ton on a car chassis introduced in 1925. That light truck was available from the factory, but you could also buy the pickup box (\$25 as per 1926 invoice), remove the turtle deck, and make your own.

Kurt Baltrusch  
Great Falls, Montana

**ENJOYED READING DANIEL BEAUDRY'S** article on Prewar Power in *HCC* #172. Great to hear about someone else's experience hot-rodding early Fords. But, it doesn't capture the culture in

California in the '50s; my experience comes much closer. At age 13 in San Francisco, I bought a 1931 Ford five-window coupe. Over the course of the next two years I channeled it, dropped in a 1953 Buick V-8 set back into the body about 6 inches, made my own floor shifter for the Buick transmission, added hydraulic brakes, dropped the front axle, and added a '32 Ford grille. The gas tank was relocated to the trunk. I also made exhaust headers for the Buick, but then I fell in love with a 1933 Ford five-window coupe and sold the '31 Model A. My brother and I painted it red, and I put in a later Ford flathead V-8 with three two-barrel carbs, Edelbrock cylinder heads, and homemade exhaust headers; we also converted to hydraulic brakes. I drove this car during my senior year in high school and for a couple of years after. Great fun in an exciting period of hot-rodding in California.


Russ Jones  
Normandy Park, Washington


**I WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR** the continued coverage of the unsung restored and survivor cars that most other publications never feature.

I would like to point out to David Conwill that the 283-cu.in. Chevrolet V-8 featured in the "Mellow Midsize" article in *HCC* #172 has five main bearings instead of the stated four.




Also, in that issue's letters section David Carniglia's comments on Pontiac engine names were just a little off. Pontiac's V-8s started off as the "Strato Streak" from 1955 to 1956, then "Tempest V-8" from 1958-1960, and in 1961 became the "Trophy V-8." Just a FYI, the Tempest four-cylinder is known as the "Indy Four."

Don Helfenstein  
Prescott, Arizona


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## Inner Sanctum

*A peek inside some outstanding home garages*

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS A. DeMAURO, RICHARD LENTINELLO, JEFF KOCH, AND TERRY McGEAN

# 48

INNER SANCTUM

# 58

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A garage—a *good* garage—is more than simply a place to store a car, its varied extra and replacement parts, and its associated revitalizing fluids. It goes beyond mere structure, more than protection. It strives to exceed the drab basics—three walls, an opening door, a roof, and big enough to hold a car inside. It's an oasis from the outside world, keeping everything from weather to prying eyes far away. Yet, at the same time, a garage should be welcoming and wondrous, as well as a place where, on occasion, automotive-related work can be performed.

What makes a great garage? It has to be reflective of the personality and interests of the person who owns it, built it, park their cars in it, repair and refine their machinery in it, spend time in it. So, we implore you to look to these examples for inspiration. Some are showpieces, decorated with decades of vintage bric-a-brac designed to bring you back to a time long past. Some are working shops where cars are repaired, built, improved, perfected—its cabinets and workbenches stacked with specific tools that receive regular (ab)use. Some fall in between and split the difference. For each of them, they serve as the ultimate expression of their owner's automotive passion—yet none are so immodest that they feel they've attained perfection, that they can't improve upon the impressive space they've already created.

What a shop keeps in is just as important as what it keeps out. Whether it's a single-car building or a

warehouse that measures its square feet in five-digit increments, a garage is its own environment, its own contained universe. Is it a serene automotive center in a world of tumult and discord? Is it an outer shell of calm that contains the sleeping storm? Does that auto-sized door prevent the work contained therein from inflicting itself on the outside world, a flailing array of tools and limbs and cusswords woven into a tapestry of mechanical poetry as owner/driver/mechanic pushes his parts, his car, and his abilities to the limits of his tolerance? Does it tell a story—of a car, of a series of cars, of the automotive life of the owner?

To be invited into a garage is to be accepted as a fellow car enthusiast—it is a tender, generous, open act, a declaration that you are worthy to witness the world the owner has built for himself and his car(s). (To be kept at arm's length may not be an insult, but surely it is at least a silent judgment.) Some may only see the mess, the clutter, the chaos, a pile of rusty parts, the miles of extension cords; they whisper about tetanus and cringe at the smell of burnt fluids. These are not people who get invited to garages. An enthusiast will not judge surroundings but find something to get excited about in those surroundings; they recognize the equipment, the purpose, the direction, the potential inside that's both realized and untapped.

We invite you into these garages, courtesy of their owners. Let them serve as inspiration for your own consecrated automotive space. And please wipe your feet on the mat before entering.

—JEFF KOCH





## RICH FAIRSERVIS

MESA, ARIZONA

Rich Fairservis pumped gas while attending high school from 1969-'72. He worked at a pair of Texaco stations in Wyoming: one in Jeffrey City, and another in Lander. "It wasn't self-serve back then, and I would have to wash windshields, and check oil and tire pressure while I filled gas tanks with 34-cent-per-gallon gasoline. You would get chewed out if you left any remnants of bugs on the windshield. What I wouldn't do for \$1.38 per hour!"

Clearly the experience made an impression. Nearly half a century on, Rich stores his car collection—an impressive selection of Mopars, Corvettes, vintage pickups, and pony cars—near his Mesa, Arizona, home. And inside the warehouse, he has constructed the fascia of a Texaco station—just like the one he used to work at. Pumps, tire rack, twin-bay service area filled with vintage equipment, everything from a John Bean wheel bubble balancer to buckets of Marfak grease. The windows of the pumphouse itself have graphics that suggest an early '60s station—they're invisible from the inside. "I did all the façade for the Texaco and hung every sign—Texaco, Lubrication, Tune-Up, all of it. And they're all level!" A variety of period items from soda machines to juke boxes to period map racks adorn the outside, and just for a second, you're convinced that you could fill your tank or get your spark plugs changed on the spot.

Sometimes, even in a warehouse, space is at a premium. In order to house the dozens of cars in Rich's collection, he employs two rows of lifts, against the walls of the shop. Each side has a row of 10 uniform Direct Lift PP9 Plus 9000 four-post lifts. The issue of lighting was solved with a pair of 16-foot Ustellar LED strip lights per lift. "Each 16-foot strip has 600 LED lights, and use a 6-amp power supply. The total cost for LED lighting is just \$50 per lift." A better solution than letting your cars sit there in the dark.

—JEFF KOCH





## FRED MANDRICK

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

Fred Mandrick likes 1968-'72 Oldsmobiles A-body performance variants. A lot. 4-4-2, Hurst/Olds, coupe, convertible, stick, automatic, original, restored, you call it, Fred's heart beats to the countdown of the launch of an Olds Rocket V-8. He has a dozen in various states of repair—he's just started another now that he's finished building one. The 4,000-square-foot building across from his home in Scottsdale isn't quite up to the task of housing his entire fleet. The office is both spacious and full of knowledge and research, his NOS GM parts room is a joy to behold, and the secret room off the back (a cold storage area which holds four cars and two lifts) feels like a treasure hunt when you discover it.

Only when you look closer do you realize what he's done. A row of W-30s from 1968-'72, in chronological order. The restored "Fouranado," a '68 4-4-2 built by George Hurst with a full FWD Toronado driveline as a proposal for the original '68 Hurst/Olds. Engines on stands: one with Weber carburetion, raced in the Can-Am series of the '60s; another full aluminum experimental block. ("That's just the 350," he tells us. "The aluminum 455 is in the '70 4-4-2 convertible I just finished.") It's more than just a garage: It's a quiet history lesson, disseminating forgotten knowledge from muscle-era Oldsmobile history.

Off to the side, through floor-length clear plastic strips you'd expect to see in a walk-in freezer, is the modest shop where Fred does the bulk of his assembly and disassembly work for his restorations. Paint and engine work are handled off-site through vendors. Fred keeps his manual Snap-on and cordless Milwaukee power tools in a set of Baldhead cabinets painted Rallye Red and black—the color of a pair of the 4-4-2s he has in his possession.

—JEFF KOCH





## TERRY GALE

ELIZABETH, COLORADO

It started innocently enough. Terry Gale was but a boy in the early 1970s when his dad paid \$50 for a 1954 Nash Ambassador. It didn't last long, but instead of fixing it, Dad parked it out on the back 40 at the family farm. Terry would play in the Nash, pretending to drive it around. Years later, after the elder Gale's passing in the late '80s, Terry took possession. By 1993, Terry owned more than two dozen cars, and had built his first garage. His focus shifted from a piece of his family history, to saving the history of Nash Motors and its descendants. Today, Rambler Ranch consists of more than 700 cars on a 165-acre ranch in Elizabeth, Colorado—an hour from the airport in Denver.

There are multiple buildings (and a forest) holding the collection. The main Nash building has cars dating back to the 1920s. There is a larger AMC and Rambler building that is as notable for the things it doesn't have (i.e., a large selection of Javelins and AMXs) as for the things it does have, such as period dealer signage, a comprehensive library of brochures, and an eye-opening array of die-cast and plastic models. Another building holds "everything else." A fourth building, under construction when we visited, will house Jeeps and Eagles; Terry owns dozens of Eagle 4x4s, in all body styles and all powertrain combinations, including the rare diesel-powered variant. TVs play dealer training films on a loop. Mannequins, dressed in period finery, add a decorative touch of fashion to several of the cars. There's also a collection of Kelvinator appliances and a restoration building. The history of American Motors, and its antecedents and descendants, are well-told at the Rambler Ranch.

—JEFF KOCH



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## CHUCK HANSON

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

When you combine a life-long passion for muscle cars with a career that has included time as a staff editor for *Car Craft* magazine, numerous seasons as the co-host of *Horsepower TV*, and the distinction of having founded the American Chevelle Enthusiasts Society (ACES), you tend to accumulate stuff. In time, that led Chuck Hanson to build himself a proper garage to house his cars and parts, while also providing a place to get work done. Back in 2005, he erected the 40 x 90-foot building, giving him 3,600 square feet of space to fill. As you can see, that's been no problem.

Some of Chuck's cars have been with him for quite some time, like the yellow '66 Chevelle SS 396 convertible he bought while still in college in 1976. The flamed '66 is a custom-built two-door wagon (Chevy stopped making two-door Chevelle wagons after '65) that was finished in 1999, and the black '70 is an SS 454 with an LS5 (360-hp) engine and rare M22 four-speed, purchased nine years ago.

Chuck, a self-professed "wrench geek," says he's completed about 10 cars in this shop, which is outfitted mostly with traditional mechanic's tools. There's a Craftsman roll chest and another larger Snap-on unit with a side cart, with some sections organized with items particular to certain restoration tasks. There's a two-post lift from Rotary, and one section of the shop is designated as the "dirty area," with the parts washer and blast cabinet. But the neatest item may be the engine run stand, which Chuck says "gets a pretty fair workout—I like to build engines."

The building also includes a "man cave" where a number of vintage gas station items and other bits of automobilia are displayed, some of which were passed along from Chuck's father. The seat/couch is from the Chevelle wagon (it has buckets now) and is flanked by a pair of Coker's new Wide Oval Firestone radials that were prototype cast-offs not suitable for road use. To accommodate gatherings for football and racing events, there's also a big-screen TV and a fridge.

—TERRY McGEAN



## DON MAGAS

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Don has owned more than 30 cars, of which he's restored 15 over the last 52 years. He purchased three new Corvairs in the 1960s, has restored a few others, and has continuously possessed at least one since then. His eclectic taste is further revealed in his choices for restoration subjects, which included a VW Beetle, a 1962 Oldsmobile nine-passenger wagon, and a 1962 Buick Special convertible, among others. His current project is a 1963 Plymouth Valiant.

His workspaces have varied greatly over the decades from his 12 x 20-foot single-car garage and a condo parking lot in which he toiled early on, to an 1,800-square-foot outbuilding on his subsequent property. He then dedicated one of the four-bays in his next garage to restoration work. When he moved to a new building to expand his automotive parts warehouse business, which also sold lifts and air compressors, he set aside a work area and added both pieces of equipment.

Upon his retirement, however, Don needed to move out of the building, so he expanded his detached home garage, which now features three bays at ground level with three more below. Restoration work is performed in a single oversized 20 x 34-foot bay with a 14-foot ceiling and a two-post lift. Additional equipment includes a parts washer, blast cabinet, portable blaster, power washer, hydraulic press, drill press, acetylene torch, and hand tools. The high-capacity compressor is on the lower level to keep the noise down in the work area.

Don explains, "The lack of body and paint equipment speaks to my disinterest in these areas. I've used the same paint and body shop for 35 years. Networking has provided me with machine and fabrication shops as needed. The only shortcomings of my present garage would be the lack of a restroom and ventilated paint room for small parts refinishing. My advice to others would be to build the biggest space you can afford now, but dream for the future."

—THOMAS DeMAURO



## CHRIS KOCH

PALM COAST, FLORIDA

There's no better place to showcase your lifetime collection of vintage automotive signs, garage equipment, pumps, and automobilia than on the walls throughout your garage. Working on your cars in a garage decorated with all the petroliana treasures that you've collected through the years makes you feel good, with each object providing a memory of the swap meet or car event where you found it.

For longtime collector Chris Koch, they are all displayed in a spacious 80 x 100-foot garage in Palm Coast, Florida. Chris is a former owner of a Ford dealership in New Jersey, and his car collection, as one would expect, features mostly Fords and Mercurys, but there's a noteworthy Pontiac, Nash, and Packard in there, too, as well as a one-off coachbuilt 1934 Ford Luxus Cabriolet that Edsel Ford had built in Germany (see *HCC* #147). His garage sits on a four-acre site and features a 40 x 60-foot repair shop with three bays and oversized overhead doors to house his 24-foot enclosed car hauler. The repair shop has a twin-post heavy-duty lift and lots of shelving to house his parts; the ceilings in both buildings are 22-feet high—perfect for displaying his large antique signs.

"I'm a history buff and like to collect early original advertising signs dealing with automotive manufacturers and dealers," Chris tells us. "The collection also included related fields such as oil and gas, bus and truck transportation, and soda. My collection is a perfect adjunct to the 20-plus antique autos on display and they complement each other quite nicely."

Those other fields that interest Chris have morphed into one of the largest collections of their own, including bus depot signs, an antique barber shop with a huge collection of vintage shaving mugs, and a 1950s diner; they are displayed in a third building, making this one of the ultimate private transportation garages bar none.

—RICHARD LENTINELLO





## MARTY AND MICK CERMINARA

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

When Marty and Mick were young, they developed an appreciation for cars by working with their father, Sam, on his vehicles, which were always interesting. As the twin brothers grew, they went on to complete vastly diverse projects on their own, such as a 1974 Pinto on a Bronco frame, the restoration of several Jaguar XKEs and sedans, and the building of numerous street rods and race cars, all while working day jobs, Marty as a layout man, fabricator, and welder, and Mick as a postal employee.

Their garage features two side-by-side bays with ample workspace and storage areas around them on one side, which is attached to fore and aft bays (also containing additional space) on the other, with an interior wall and door dividing them. Over the years they've concluded that, "The layout of our garage has been fine, with room to work, room to paint, and room to store the cars when finished."

Currently pictured in the two main bays are the brothers' 1966 Chevrolet pickup and 1998 Grand Am race car. They restomodded the truck with a 383-cu.in. V-8 and 3x2 induction among other upgrades, and the 615-cu.in. big-block Chevy Pro Stock chassis race car runs 5.20s in the 1/8-mile. In the back bay of the garage is their 1958 Corvette (283/245-hp, four-speed) that they're restoring to stock.

Fortified with a bead roller, sheetmetal shear and brake, multiple welders, sandblaster and cabinet, drill press, hand tools, and more. One major piece of shop equipment surprisingly not mentioned is a lift. They explain, "If we had to do it over again, we would have put high ceilings in our garage, so we could have a lift, but we're 70 years old now, so it's a bit too late to justify that kind of investment. Though we still love racing and building things, we don't move as quickly as we used to."

—THOMAS DeMAURO





## PAUL MENIN

NORTHWESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Back in the mid-'60s, young Paul Menin was riding a school bus and saw a GTO drive by. From that moment on, he was determined to own one—a driving force that still has not quit. After buying a brand-new '67 GTO (that he still owns), Paul started acquiring parts as spares, which then led to helping other people find parts. Paul became a school teacher, but continued buying and selling Pontiac parts to subsidize his love of cars. All these years later, he has amassed quite a collection of automobiles, parts, and other Pontiac ephemera, all housed in his home garage and the outbuilding “barn” in his backyard. Though Paul still deals parts and restores cars, in recent years he has spent time arranging a lot of his Pontiac treasures into a sort of museum, which he likes to share with other enthusiasts.

But this is a working garage as well, and the very place where Paul does all his disassembly and assembly for his restoration projects. Body and paint work are farmed out to pros and handled elsewhere, but many hours have been spent here putting together Pontiacs that have gone on to win numerous awards. The work bay, which housed Paul's '72 Le Mans with rare factory 455 HO during our shoot, features a portable scissor-style lift to raise a vehicle up about 3 feet for easier access. There's also a gas-fired Modine heater hanging from the ceiling that brings the temps up in a hurry, even on the coldest New England days.

Upstairs, Paul has arranged lots of Pontiac promotional items, along with plenty of NOS parts and some custom signage he's had made by a local sign maker, including a table that looks like a vintage dealership roundel.

—TERRY McGEAN



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## DAVID OCHSER

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

In the fall of 1977, Chevrolet ran an ad in *Road & Track*. Anyone with \$11.50 could mail away for a genuine 10 x 22-foot billboard of a Silver Anniversary, silver-over-gray Corvette coupe, in multiple pieces and neatly folded into a manila envelope. When 17-year-old David Ochser was asked what kind of car he wanted for his birthday, he responded with, "Corvette." Why not? His mom had a yellow 1977 Corvette in the driveway, bought up the street at Bass Chevrolet in Seaford, Long Island, New York.

On his birthday, David received his Corvette... in the form of the billboard. Both parents were in on it. Oh, how they laughed. David wasn't laughing. But he used it as motivation. "I held onto that billboard for 30 years," he says. "I'm a packrat, and even then, I said, one day I'm going to build a garage, and that billboard will be the focal point." Once he moved to Scottsdale, Arizona, in 2005, David built the garage of his dreams (out of slump block, to match his home)—and installed the billboard.

The car came later. David stumbled into a curtly worded local ad online for a Silver Anniversary Corvette while vacationing in Las Vegas. The seller, who thought it had 121,000 miles on it, couldn't find the paperwork. But once David bought it and got it home, he discovered that it had only 21,000 original miles, that the paperwork was hidden in the luggage area, and that it had been sold new in New York state *the day before his 17th birthday* in 1978. A year and a day later, on his 18th birthday, it was sold yet again. It was kismet that he'd own it again.

—JEFF KOCH

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## JIM SCHULTZ

CHINO VALLEY, ARIZONA

The effect is best seen at night. Stepping over the threshold of the largely unadorned metal prefab building, it's as if you've been transported into the past. There's little external lighting on what is colloquially known as Rocket Ranch, Jim Schultz's 6,000-square-foot hideaway he refers to as a "barn," nestled into the rolling folds of a Chino Valley, Arizona, hillside. One of the founders of the Arizona chapter of the Oldsmobile Club of America (OCA), and the next president of the National Antique Oldsmobile Club (NAOC), Jim raises the door.

It's not just the cars themselves—a row of Oldsmobiles up one wall and down the other, some restored, some original, some ready for some TLC, parked facing out in roughly chronological order—that impress. It's the setup: the ephemera, the blown-up vintage ads that highlight a particular model or era, the genuine dealership signage, multiple 25-foot strings of #6 and #9 Christmas lights providing the dim, if tantalizing, illumination. With all of the highly-chromed noses evenly placed and facing out, and the soft incandescent lighting,

it's as if a trip through that door took you back in time to a backroad postwar used-car dealer, before the era of garish neon in every parking lot, where strings of lights raged against the darkness and showed the retailer's wares.

Tucked away in one corner is an Oldsmobile research library that could rival any you'd find in Lansing. Service manuals are shelved, and Schultz is forever answering queries from vintage Rocket owners with issues to solve. Why not? He's got the answers at his fingertips.

—JEFF KOCH

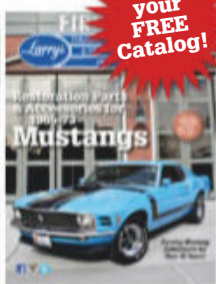
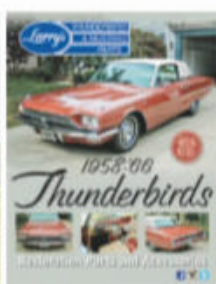
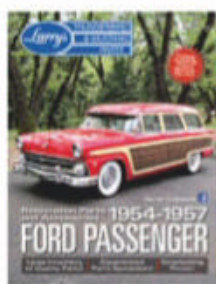


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# Outfitting Insights

## Setting up a working garage

BY TERRY McGEAN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEMMINGS STAFF

If you're drawn to old cars, you're almost certainly going to find yourself working on them. Whether out of necessity or desire, turning wrenches on vintage vehicles is part and parcel of ownership. Even those among us who can afford to have professionals handle restorations and rebuilds very often still want to have a space to maintain those hobby cars.

But most of us won't have access to commercial-style buildings in which to work—instead, we have to create suitable workshops from whatever garages came with our homes. If you're a little more fortunate, you may have been able to erect a dedicated garage on your property just for old-car projects. In any case, the space is just the start—outfitting it is what turns it into a functional place to

get work done. If you've been at the old-car thing for a while, you've likely gone through phases of making do with limited tools and space, but, even if you succeeded in getting a lot accomplished that way, you know well how much more productive, and enjoyable, hobby car work can be with a properly outfitted shop.

To that end, we've compiled some insights to help you plan, or just improve, the place where you tinker with your collector car. Don't view this as a must-have list of items, but rather, a menu of possibilities from which you can pick and choose the things that make the most sense, or that will have the most impact, for your space.

We're going to start with enhancements to the space itself. Plenty of functional shops still have bare concrete underfoot, but from our experience, nothing transforms

a cold, stark building like some sort of floor covering. Epoxy coatings have become quite popular, and are relatively simple to apply these days, but there are less permanent options too, like heavy-duty snap-fit garage floor tiles and roll-out matting.

The item that probably tops most gearheads' wish lists is a lift, and in recent years these have also become far more accessible and feasible for home garage use than ever before. Above-ground units vary in design, and some have specific requirements for floor quality, and of course, there needs to be adequate ceiling height, but there are lots of options here.

We're also going to touch on heating options, workbenches and storage, compressed air, and other pieces of equipment that can help to transform your workspace into a more functional place to spend time.





A bare concrete floor provides a solid foundation for getting work done but may not be the most attractive or inviting surface. Concrete can also stain from oil spills and other automotive fluid messes. Plus, from experience, we know that a shop with some sort of floor covering just seems like a more inviting place to set to work. This view of our shop floor being measured for a lift illustrates the kind of ugliness that some sort of covering could alleviate.



Epoxy floor coatings once seemed the province of industrial outfits, but today there are simple kits offered from multiple companies that make these products feasible and affordable for home garage use. Most require cleaning the surface with strong degreasers if the concrete has already been stained with oil and grease. The old concrete in the Hemmings shop turned out to have an aged clear coating that had to be removed with a buffing machine outfitted with Scotch-Brite-type scouring pads. Talk to the coating manufacturer ahead of time to ensure your floor is suitable.



Laying out the epoxy product is simple, and most are water-based, so fumes are not a significant problem. A pro tip our installers gave us was wearing old golf shoes during the process—the spiked cleats allow walking on the wet product without leaving footprints.



Most epoxy kits offer the option of a clear topcoat, and these are often urethane that will produce more fumes than the epoxy, but good ventilation is all that's needed during the curing process, which typically takes less than 24 hours. Various colors are offered, and terrazzo speckled finishes are another option, along with non-skid textured additive. The finished result is said to be impervious to most automotive fluids and cleans up easily. The coating in the Hemmings shop is now over 10 years old and still looks great.







An alternative to epoxy is garage floor matting, which usually comes as a simple roll-out product. The matting we've worked with in the past has either a rubber-like quality or something more like heavy-duty linoleum. Various patterns and colors are offered, and some can be had with patterns, like checkerboard. We've had a section of G-Floor matting in one area of our shop for nearly a decade that is still in great shape.



Yet another option for flooring are heavy-duty garage tiles. These are designed specifically for use in garages and other workspaces, and most are rated to handle significant weight. Installation is simple, usually with snap-fit assembly, which allows for alternating color patterns and can accommodate oddly shaped areas. These tiles are from RaceDeck.



Most garage tile systems include beveled edging to finish the tiled area and provide a ramp up to its surface, so items on casters can be rolled to the tile surface easily. Another benefit of the tiles is that they are non-permanent, so they can be disassembled and reassembled multiple times if need be.



If you've dreamed of having a lift in your own shop, it's probably never been more attainable. You'll have choices to make, and there are considerations regarding ceiling height and floor quality, plus electrical service requirements, but even with limitations, there are options available. We have a two-post Bend-Pak above-ground lift in the Hemmings shop that we've been using for more than 10 years.



We selected a two-post unit because we intended to do a lot of under-car work, much of which would require the vehicle's wheels to be off. If you're ordering this type of lift, check on the manufacturer's requirements for concrete slab thickness—4 inches seem to be a common minimum. Though many units can be installed by the DIY user, we had a professional handle ours, and felt it was money well spent.





Another popular style of home lift is the four-post “drive-on” rack. Many of these are designed to be somewhat self-supporting, so floor requirements tend to be less stringent; some four-post units can even be moved around on casters. Though the vehicle remains on its wheels with this type, some units have optional center jacking trays that can be used with small bottle jacks to raise a wheel off the ramps for removal.



Another interesting product from Race Ramps are these stands that they call Wheel Cribs. These are also offered in a variety of dimensions and are designed to support a vehicle by its wheels. The 12-inch versions we have are stackable two-piece units that can be used as 6-inch stands as well. The only caveat is that you’ll need a jack that can lift your vehicle high enough; shorter Cribs are offered as well.



There are plenty of other options for getting under-car work done when you don’t have a lift. Ramps have long been a popular choice for the driveway mechanic, and now Race Ramps offers its own take, with lightweight ramps that come in a variety of dimensions. Each of these 40-inch Sport Ramps can support 1,500 pounds.



Air compressors are another garage staple, and here again, choices abound. If you only intend to run an impact gun or air ratchet, a portable unit would probably suffice. To run sanders, grinders, and other constant-duty devices, you’ll need something with at least 60 gallons of capacity, twin cylinders, and a 3.5-horsepower motor at a minimum. Most units of this size also require 220-volt electrical service, and a dedicated control panel is a good idea.

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Running long hoses around the shop from the compressor isn't the best way to go, especially if you have significant distance to cover. A better plan is to plumb your compressor with hardline around the perimeter of the shop. Although PVC tubing is easy to work with, don't use it here; that stuff is generally not made for the levels of pressure your system may see, and we've heard too many tales of exploding sections. Black pipe is popular and safe, but moisture in the compressed air can cause it to rust internally over time. Copper tube is another option, or you can go with one of the newer dedicated systems that use aluminum tubing and quick-fit unions like this system from RapidAir. When it comes to running a hose to your spray gun or media blasting cabinet, use the smaller 1/4-inch diameter, because the air flows faster and with more power than a larger 3/8-inch hose.



A staple of any shop is a workbench, and these can range from an old door propped up on sawhorses to beautifully formed stainless steel tables that look like something from an operating room. Plenty of shops have nice home-built wood benches, but if you'd prefer a metal surface, reasonably priced steel benches are available from a variety of sources, like Harbor Freight.



Most home garage spaces can be tight enough that moving cars around with floor jacks is sometimes required. We've found a much better option is a set of jacking dollies. These fit around the vehicle's tires and can then be jacked—either by mechanical means or hydraulically, to raise each wheel off the floor, so that the casters of each dolly can then be used to maneuver the vehicle. These are incredibly handy even if you need to swing cars around in a tight space.



For those of us in the Northeast, a heated garage is another gearhead dream that can be fulfilled through a variety of means. Dedicated garage heaters for the home, rather than commercial buildings, are now available, like this Modine Hot Dawg gas-fired unit (left). Our own Richard Lentinello installed one in his home shop years ago, fueling it with propane, and was very pleased with its performance. This was an 85,000-Btu heater, plenty for his 800-square-foot four-car building. Larger units are available, and most can be set up to run on propane or natural gas. Another option are electric units like this one, which come in a variety of Btu ratings. Here again, 220-volt electrical service will likely be required, and a thermostat is a wise addition as well, rather than just using an on/off switch. This 2,500-5,000 Watt unit heats a two-car garage to a comfortable working temp in about 20 minutes.



Organization is key to maximizing the efficiency of a workspace, though it's often lacking in home garages. One of the best ways to store parts, supplies, and equipment is with cabinets, and some of the dedicated garage cabinets on the market today can also do a lot to make your space look better, too. We'll admit that our shop still lacks big cabinets, but could certainly benefit from a few units like these, offered by Moduline.



How many of us have spent time straining to see what we were doing with only a couple aged, yellowing incandescent light bulbs to illuminate the work? Florescent fixtures have been the standard for shop lighting for decades, and they still work well, but the emergence of LED units provides a great alternative. LED fixtures can provide excellent illumination while using less power and being less fragile than florescents. Plus, LEDs can now be purchased inexpensively.





**JUNE 22 - 30, 2019**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 22**

**START:** Main Street, Riverside, CA - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
**LUNCH:** California Route 66 Museum, Victorville, CA - noon  
**OVERNIGHT:** The Boulevard, Lancaster, CA - 4:30 p.m.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 23**

**LUNCH:** Bishop City Park, Bishop, CA - noon  
**OVERNIGHT:** Lampe Park, Gardnerville, NV - 5:30 p.m.

**MONDAY, JUNE 24**

**LUNCH:** Mill Street, Grass Valley, CA - 11:45 a.m.  
**PIT STOP:** State Theater, Myers Street, Oroville, CA - 2:30 p.m.  
**OVERNIGHT:** City Plaza, Downtown Chico, CA - 5 p.m.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 25**

**LUNCH:** Recreation Grove Park, Willits, CA - 12:15 p.m.  
**OVERNIGHT:** 2nd Street, Old Town, Eureka, CA - 5:15 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26**

**LUNCH:** Curry County Fairgrounds, Gold Beach, OR -- noon  
**OVERNIGHT:** Southwest G Street, Grants Pass, OR - 5 p.m.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 27**

**LUNCH:** Rim Village, Crater Lake, OR - noon  
**OVERNIGHT:** Tower Theater, Wall Street, Bend, OR - 5 p.m.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 28**

**LUNCH:** Aeroplane & Auto Museum, Hood River, OR - noon  
**OVERNIGHT:** Fort Vancouver, Vancouver, WA - 5 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 29**

**PIT STOP:** Maritime Museum, Astoria, OR - 10 a.m.  
**LUNCH:** Commerce Avenue, Longview, WA - noon  
**OVERNIGHT:** LeMay Family Collection, Spanaway, WA - 5:15 p.m.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 30**

**FINISH:** LeMay - America's Car Museum, Tacoma, WA - 1:30 p.m.

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# Superb Sedanet

*The careful, award-winning restoration of a 1949 Cadillac Series 62 Club Coupe*

BY MATTHEW LITWIN • PHOTOGRAPHY BY BILL BRAVO • RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DAVID BORNEMAN

There's little debate that 1949 was a landmark year for Detroit, which poured sweeping mechanical and styling changes from its automotive factories by the cubic ton. History tells us, though, that Cadillac had a head start.

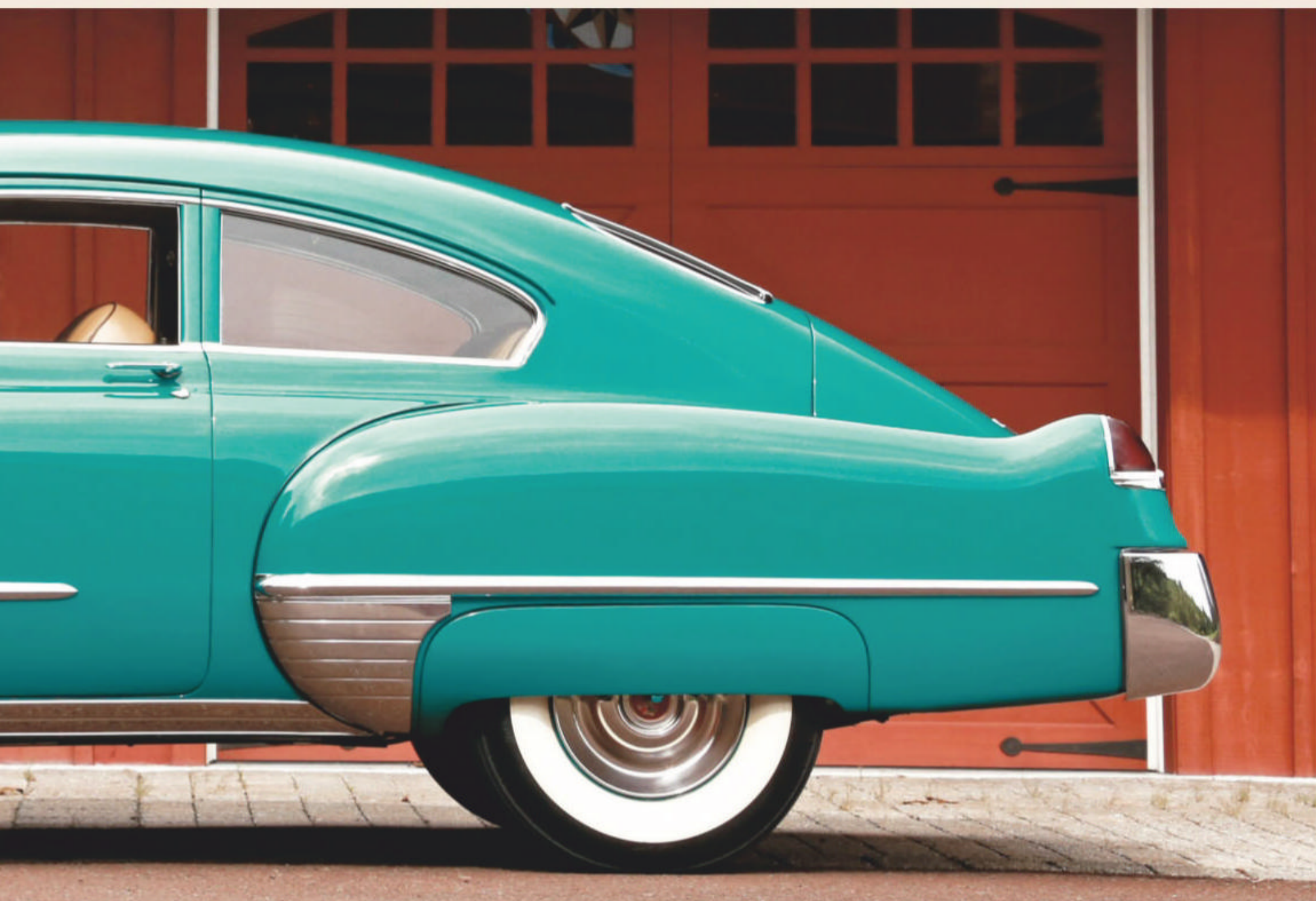
Inspired by a sneak peek at the P-38 Lightning, Harley Earl's stylists

had drafted some of the fighter plane's radical features into the division's "Interceptor" concept exercises. After the end of hostilities, several Interceptor elements debuted on six of Cadillac's 11 1948 models, most notably "rudder-type styling" adorning each rear fender. While the tailfin was intended to complement the graceful new look of the Cadillac,

it effectively stole the show when it appeared at dealerships in March 1948. A year later, the styling was joined by the division's high-compression 331-cu.in. overhead-valve V-8 engine.

All of Cadillac's best visual attributes of 1948, combined with the mechanical advancements developed for 1949, were not lost on Loren Hulber. A resident





of Macungie, Pennsylvania, his long admiration of the redesigned “Standard of the World” eventually led him to the 1949 Series 62 Club Coupe gracing these pages, one of 7,515 produced during Cadillac’s record-breaking year.

“It had been sold new to a gentleman in Soldier, Iowa, who owned the car for nearly 40 years,” Loren recalls. “His estate then sold it to an Omaha, Nebraska, electrician who had commissioned a restoration that took eight years to complete. When he passed, the family listed it for sale in *Hemmings Motor News*, complete with some factory and dealer paperwork confirming that the car had been ordered with a leather interior. It had not been modified—except for seat and door-panel upholstery—so I felt that this was

a solid car I could add to my collection that would not require a tremendous amount of work.”

As many of us are aware, photographs only tell part of a car’s story, and upon delivery Loren discovered that the body exhibited several imperfections, chief among them were several small dents and a number of scratches in the paint. The engine bay required extensive detailing, and it was obvious the chassis—particularly the brake system—would need attention. Before the Cadillac could even be driven into his garage, it stalled multiple times before refusing to start altogether.

Loren tells us: “I can’t fault the estate since none of the family members knew that much about the car. Overall, it had been very well preserved and main-

tained, but when I called Dave and Paula Borneman, of Borneman’s Blast from the Past Restoration & Customs in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, to examine the car in detail, we quickly pieced together what had happened. Although the Cadillac had been stored in a climate-controlled space, it must have sat for a prolonged period, which is never good for any car; it looked as though many items had been thrown on top of the body.”

Dave explains: “When we brought the Club Coupe to our facility, we assessed its condition beyond the obvious and compiled a list. Collectively, we determined that although it needed a restoration, there was enough of the previous effort worth saving. Rather than strip the car down to a bare frame, we embarked on a body-on-frame restoration. The

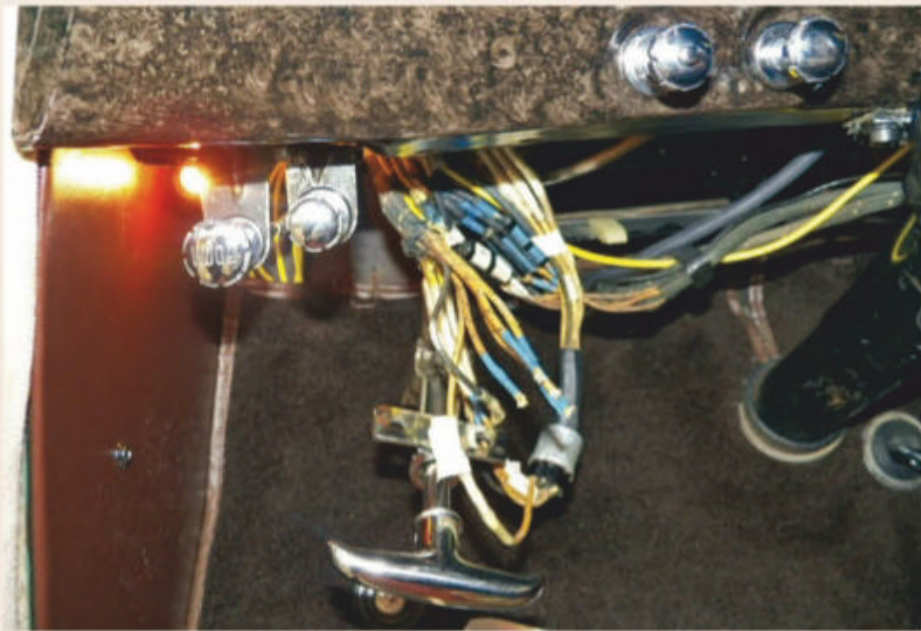




The 1949 Cadillac Series 62 Club Coupe as it appeared when listed for sale in early 2017. Advertised as a two-owner car with 89,000 miles on its odometer, it had been subjected to an eight-year restoration by the second owner during the early Nineties.



Factory documents that accompanied the Cadillac confirmed the body plate's "special order" designation that specified the installation of leather upholstery at the factory. The crushed velour fabric may have been a financial shortcut during the earlier restoration.



Upon delivery, the Club Coupe was barely functional. As its second restoration commenced, the team discovered that—although most of the wiring had been labelled—several key connectors were missing; note the blue-taped wire ends with no connectors.



Considering the car's point of origin, surprisingly no corrosion was discovered during its inspection. Unfortunately, leaking brake fluid connections and bad axle seals made a mess of some of the suspension parts, several of which required a thorough restoration.



The rear fender has been removed, as have several pieces of trim. It's a little difficult to see here; however, if you look closely you will note that the door is overlapping the body along most of the door's aft edge, indicating a severe alignment issue.



The left rear fender as it appeared shortly after removal from the body. It was reported to have a long scratch into the primer below, while the horizontal trim—already removed—was damaged. The undamaged stone guard needed to be polished.





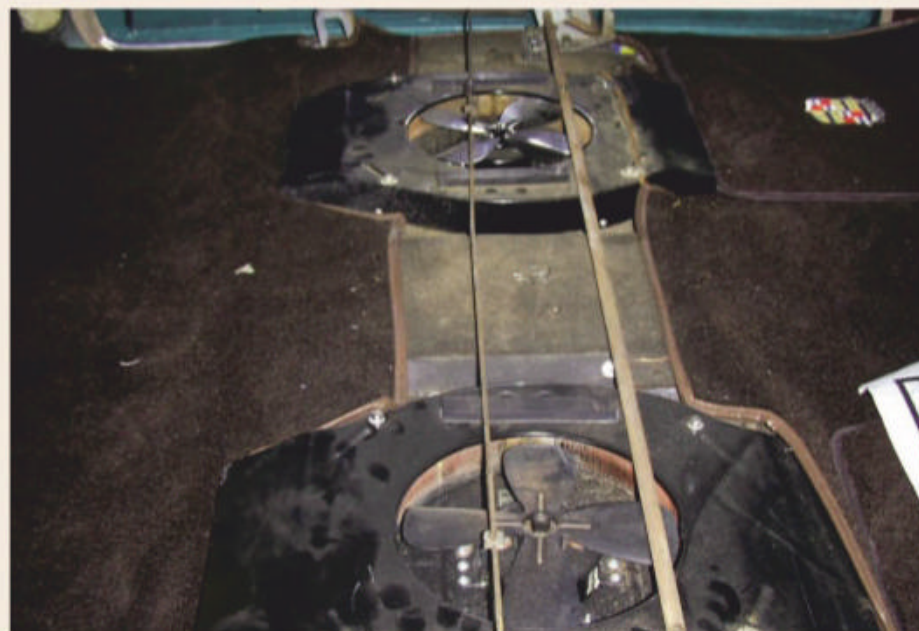
After realigning the door to match the contour of the front fender, the overlap at the opposite end was able to be eliminated. The door was cut slightly and recontoured; the metal was then sealed in primer and sanded as final tweaks were made.



This is the center section of the original differential. A small crack in the exterior hinted at trouble, which turned out to be exceptionally excessive play between the ring and pinion gears. Rather than rebuild this, a replacement unit was purchased.



The headliner was determined to be "factory correct" for the Cadillac, so it was retained and cleaned. The rear package shelf had to be replaced, though, and there was a conspicuous absence of a vapor barrier when the side panels and seat were removed.



Like the headliner, the floor carpet was also factory correct for the car and was left in place. The optional automatic heating system, part of which is exposed here, required cleaning and new electric motors in order to function properly.



Using factory promotional photos and literature for guidance, new pleated leather upholstery and support foam was fitted to the original seat frames. Although the frame had not suffered any damage, a few springs on the driver's side needed to be replaced.



After a compression test, it was believed the fuel system was the culprit behind the 331-cu.in. V-8's stubbornness. Old gas had gummed up the carburetor and fuel pump, both of which had to be rebuilt. The engine was then rebuilt with new gaskets and painted.





**The steering wheel was restored and tube-type radio rebuilt to original specifications. Leather door panels replicate factory pattern.**

initial estimate was that it would take a couple months to bring it up to concours standards, but like anything else, when you hit one spot requiring work it opens a can of worms elsewhere."

The Borneman's team began the Cadillac's second restoration by addressing the visual concerns. According to Dave, "There were some minor dents—or the paint was marred—on the trunk, the roof, the rear body

apron, and the left rear fender, and much of the trim needed to be polished or replated, such as one of the rear bumper guards where a section of chrome had flaked off, and the steel had been painted silver. The biggest problem we had to fix was the door alignment; it was terrible. The overlap at the back of the driver's door was 1/16th of an inch—no gap at all—which resulted in damage to the paint and the body."

Dave quips that it's possible the problem could have arisen had new rocker panels been installed without proper consideration for body alignment; however, he was quick to add that proper balance and the forward door gap was just as much a potential factor. "By fixing the forward alignment and balance first, it allowed us to see what was needed on the aft end of the doors. Ultimately, we had to cut and reshape the lower corner of both—not a significant amount, but just enough to create a uniform gap.

"As each section was repaired, bare metal was sealed in primer to prevent it from flash-corrosion. We could then apply a skim coat of filler, sand it smooth, and seal everything in a final layer of primer. Some panels, such as the rear fenders, rear apron, and the hood, were removed prior to having work done on those areas. Interestingly, the underside of the hood had to be repainted, rather than the exterior. This was because of exposed primer and green overspray from the last restoration."

While the body was being addressed, they removed the front and rear seats, as well as the door and rear side panels. It's believed that the installation of crushed velour fabric was driven by financial reasons after considering the cost of replicating the original leather pattern. Loren's desire for a factory-correct restoration had its benefits in that by removing the seats they could



**Cadillac's primary mechanical improvement for 1949 was the introduction of the 160-hp 331-cu.in V-8. It was 188 pounds lighter yet more efficient than the old flathead V-8.**





Doing what I call a “concours restoration” on a car that’s been restored once is almost more difficult; you have to be careful to preserve what doesn’t require work while addressing areas that do. To that point, my advice to anyone considering the same body-on-frame approach is to begin with a car that has a minimal amount of modifications—or ideally, none at all. Start at the front bumper and work back, documenting every variance and issue that needs to be fixed, and put it together in an itemized checklist. Allow for a variance in your budget—because there’s always something that pops up that wasn’t accounted for—and then start at it.

then address other cabin malfunctions, including the under-seat heaters.

“Removing the seats gave us better access to the wiring behind the dash as well,” Dave recalls. “We knew some of the equipment wasn’t working, and we discovered that although white tags labeled almost every lead, some of those connections were never completed. We did have to replace the heater motors, in addition to having the clock and radio rebuilt. The woodgrain dash panel needed to be touched up in a couple spots, and the steering wheel was sent out for restoration.”

Next on the list was the Cadillac’s engine and chassis. The 160-hp V-8 was stripped of its intake, cylinder heads, and other bolt-on components without removing the block from the chassis. In doing so, it was determined that a new fuel pump was required, along with a rebuilt carburetor. The block and other removed components were then cleaned and/or repainted

before reassembly with new gaskets.

As to the chassis, it was stripped, cleaned, inspected, and repainted. New suspension bushings and shock absorbers were incorporated in the rebuild, along with entirely new brake and fuel systems, including a new tank. The differential was another story.

Dave tells us that, “Loren reported a whine during the brief drive. When we took a closer look, we found that there was a crack in the center section’s exterior, so we removed the unit and inspected the ring-and-pinion set within. I want to say that there was an excessive amount of play—over an inch and a half—in the pinion setup. It’s not a very common differential to rebuild due to its design, and not a lot of people have the necessary tools. I was able to locate another differential in very good condition. All it needed was new axle bearings and paint.”

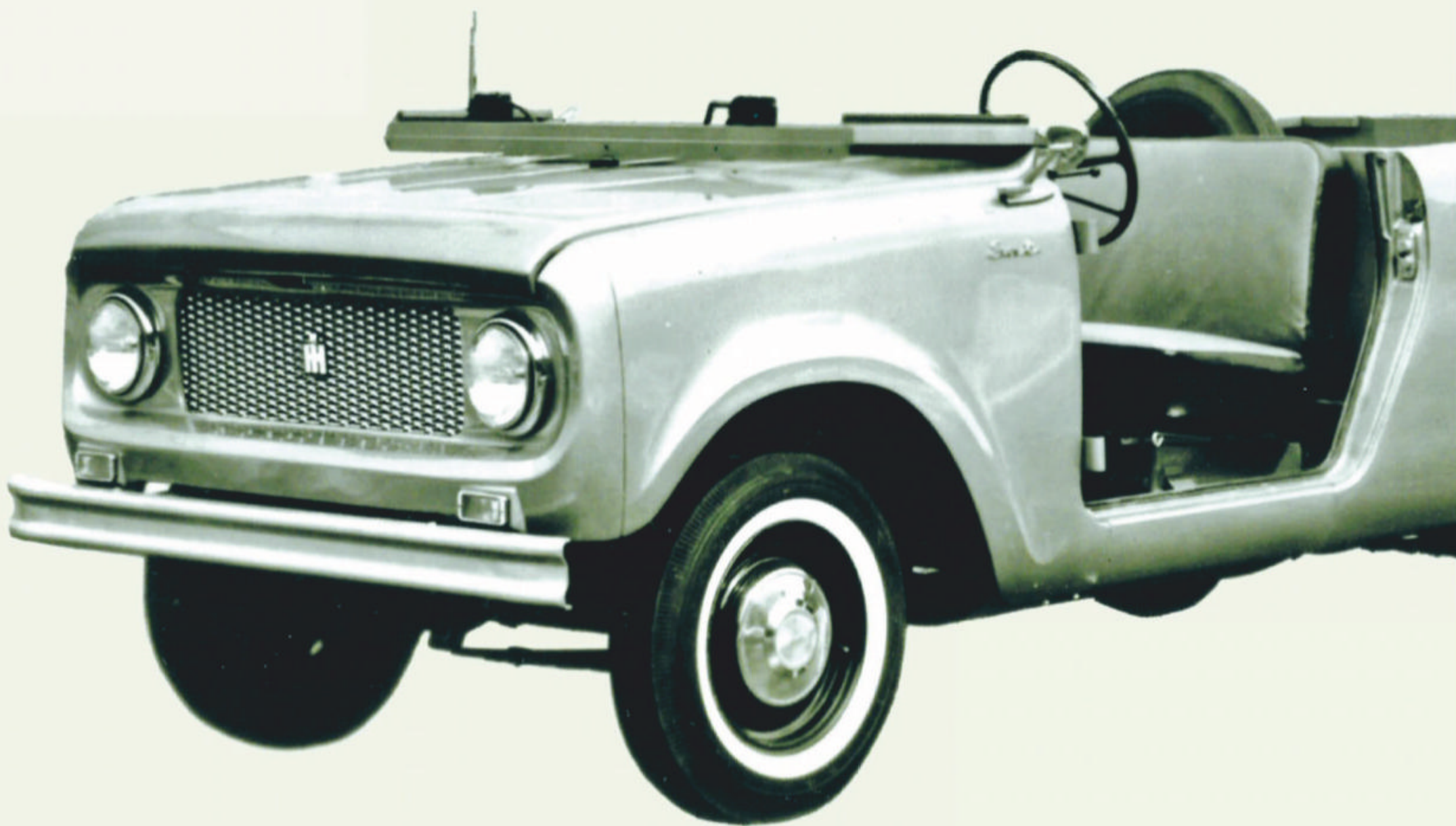
By now the patchwork of primer

had cured, allowing the shop to color match and apply Lucerne Green Metallic paint as needed, blended perfectly into the existing paint. As that cured, new door panels, preceded by proper vapor barriers, were installed, along with a new package shelf and re-covered seats. The final stage of reassembly concluded in later summer 2018 with the return of any removed panels, along with the Club Coupe’s restored trim, to the body.

Loren proudly tells us: “It turns out that Dave and his team had the car for nearly a year, but it was necessary for them to achieve such a sensational result.” That’s not hyperbole—their work in bringing this Cadillac to concours show standards was evident in its first outing at the 2018 Radnor Hunt Concours where it won Best in Class. It has since won an AACA National award that will be announced at the annual AACA banquet in Philadelphia in February 2019. 🏆







# Scout's Honor

*The beauty behind International Harvester's Scout and Traveler*

BY PATRICK FOSTER • PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE PAT FOSTER COLLECTION

During March 1960, the citizens of Fort Wayne, Indiana, wondered what was going on. Manufacturing giant International Harvester had acquired a more than half-million-square-foot factory building next door to its existing truck plant and locals wondered why. After all, the company didn't need additional space for the trucks it was producing. But International was readying a brand-new model for introduction as a 1961 and would build it in the new plant. The facility needed to be large because the new vehicle was expected to be a high-

volume model. In fact, it became the most popular International of all.

Debuted in the fall of 1960, the new product was a range of small utility vehicles dubbed the International Scout 80. A compact two-door utility car along the lines of the Jeep Universal, it was roomier, more stylish, and much more civilized. Designed under the direction of IH styling chief Ted Ornas, Scout boasted clean, unpretentious styling, with slab sides, soft lines, a blunt front end, and a simple grille. The choice of body configurations included a base roadster, a pickup with steel cab roof, a soft top pickup, and

a cargo hauler with a full-length roof. Despite its appearance, however, no matter which configuration was chosen there was room for only two or three people. Designed as a small pickup, there was a fixed bulkhead behind the front seat, rendering the rear area good for cargo only. That was a mistake but one that could be easily corrected.

Powering the Scout was an interesting new engine called the Comanche, a slant OHV four-cylinder of 152 cubic inches, created by cutting off one bank of the company's 304-cu.in. V-8. This neat little engine was good for 93 horsepower,





« Introduced for 1961, International Harvester's Scout was a smallish utility vehicle that could be stripped down for off-road adventure or fitted out for a variety of work uses. The base roadster shown here has had its standard steel doors removed and windshield folded.

» In addition to the roadster, Scout offered pickup and wagon-type models in both hard- and soft-top versions.

» This 1964 four-wheel-drive Scout hardtop pickup is dressed up with wheel discs, which add a measure of style and brightness.

## Which one's the Scout?



1 is. It's sporting the SCOUT vinyl cab top. (And that makes it a sporty pickup.) 2 is. It's equipped with the SCOUT steel TRAVEL-TOP. (Just the thing for light delivery work around town. Or for traveling from town to town.) 3 is. It's wearing the SCOUT steel cab top. (Recommended for winter duty north of the Mason-Dixon Line. So is a heater.) 4 is. It's outfitted with the SCOUT vinyl TRAVEL-TOP. (Add bucket seats and an upholstered back seat and you have a jaunty little wagon.) And 5 is, too. Even though it doesn't

have any kind of a top. And the windshield's folded forward. (Which means it's a Scout stripped down for fun.) Well, now that you know that each is a SCOUT—which one are you going to buy?

P.S. They all have a sturdy frame and rugged components and a 93 hp 4-cylinder engine that goes about 20 miles per gallon. Price is \$1690.85.\* See an INTERNATIONAL Dealer or Branch to test drive the SCOUT and buy it. International Harvester Co., 180 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Illinois.

THE  
**Scout**  
BY INTERNATIONAL®

SCOUT is the registered trademark for a vehicle manufactured exclusively by the International Harvester Company.  
\*Manufacturer's list price f.o.b. factory exclusive of taxes, preparation and handling.







« The Scout Travel Top version became the most popular model, especially after the company eliminated the bulkhead behind the front seat that had prevented its use as a family station wagon.



» International's Styling Department was staffed with several talented designers, and they came up with successive trim packages to maintain interest in the Scout. The Butterscotch and white Scout Comanche shown here entered production in November 1971; this Comanche has a V-8, according to the "V" emblem on the front fender.



« For 1969, International introduced the Scout 800A, which featured a stylish grille and headlamp bezels. Interior trim was upgraded, and a smoother, quieter 232-cu.in. AMC straight-six was available. Note the chrome wheels and redline tires.

» Throughout its life, the Scout pickup was a hard-working compact pickup that offered easy maneuverability and good fuel economy. These vehicles are highly prized today.

while competitor Jeep's ancient four-cylinder F-head engine produced only 72 hp.

The new Scout seemed strikingly modern compared to the Jeep. Its Travel Top model included a full-length roof, and all models offered steel doors, unlike the Jeep CJ's fabric doors (or no doors!), or creaky and claustrophobic metal cab. Scout was also more comfortable, rode better, and carried more cargo. Priced at \$1,771 for the two-wheel-drive version, or \$2,139 with four-wheel drive, it was the closest in concept to the Jeep of any American vehicle ever produced, and Jeep's first real competition. In its first year, more than 28,000 Scouts were built.

After a successful launch, IH manage-

ment tried to keep the momentum going, so the 1962 Scouts received several improvements to pique interest. A new "Walk-Thru" option eliminated the bulkhead behind the front seat (except on pickup models), and a rear seat was now available, as well as sporty front bucket seats. Midway through the model year roll-down windows became available to replace the sliding type. Also debuting was a new optional full-length soft-top. International even offered an aftermarket kit

to convert former bulkhead models to the Walk-Thru type. Before long, outside suppliers offered a range of work implements including mowing equipment, heavy-duty bumpers, hitches, rotary brooms, snow plows, and more. Nearly 29,000 Scouts were produced for the 1962 model year.

Further improvements came in 1963 with new seat and top options, along with a host of mechanical upgrades. Styling, though, remained the same, and production fell slightly to 26,360 for the year. Scout carried over to the next model year with little change.

In late 1964, International introduced two limited-edition models. The first was the "Red Carpet" Scout, created to celebrate production of the 100,000th Scout vehicle. Painted white with red carpeting, seats, interior panels, and instrument panel, the Red Carpet Scout listed for \$2,021 plus options. Some 3,000 were built and public enthusiasm was so strong that an additional limited-edition Scout, called the Champagne Series, was rushed into production. The latter Scouts had a







Scout styling was mostly unchanged through mid-1971 when it was finally replaced by the all-new Scout II.

Styling of the 1972 Scout II was more evolutionary than revolutionary, with added length, a full-width grille, new bumpers, and a more stylish greenhouse. To add appeal, several new graphics packages were added.

The 1976 XLC demonstrated the sort of exciting sports packages that could be applied to the Scout II's simple lines. Styled wheels were a big element in giving the vehicle a more youthful, sporty look.

choice of exterior colors, a fancy interior, and an optional turbocharged version of the Comanche engine providing 115 hp.

Next, International introduced a revised, more civilized Scout 800 for 1965. Improvements included a fixed windshield with bottom-mounted wipers and new instrument panel, plus standard roll-down side windows and vent windows. Brake and clutch pedals were now suspended, eliminating drafts and water leaks, and Travel Top versions got a new acoustical headliner for a quieter cabin. Styling was little changed.

The 1966 Scout introduced the stylish new Sport Tops with a fastback rear section, in hardtop and convertible versions. Scout also got as an option a powerful new 192-cu.in., 111-hp, four-cylinder engine in August, replacing the previous turbo-four option. Then in 1967 came a 266-cu.in.,

154-hp V-8 option. It was a hit; by mid-year nearly half the Scouts being produced were equipped with V-8s.

Towards the end of the 1968 model year came the facelifted 1969 Scout 800A, with new grille and headlamp bezels, along with upgraded interior trim. There was also a new American Motors-sourced 232-cu.in. straight-six as an option. As always, the dressier Scouts proved very popular, so in August 1969 a stylish new "Aristocrat" limited-edition model debuted. Painted silver with a black roof, Aristocrat boasted chrome wheels, bumpers, and roof rack, plus a high-style interior done up in blue. Early in the model year, the 200,000th Scout was produced. In August 1970, the Scout 800A was replaced by a slightly-altered 1971 Scout 800B.







The U.S. Olympic Ski Team chose the Scout as its team vehicle for the 1976 Olympics. To spotlight its vehicles, International designers created this special Olympic Ski Team model's graphics and interior trim.



When the Scout became International's only light-duty vehicle, the company decided to expand the line by adding a pickup version on a longer 118-inch wheelbase. The cab top was different from the former pickup model, with the "C" panels slightly sloping rather than bolt upright.



Then came a completely new Scout in April 1971. The Scout II was longer, roomier, and more stable over the road. Though completely restyled, it retained classic clean and simple lines. The grille was now full-width and incorporated the headlamps. Scout II Travel Top models looked especially sporty because their rear side window line featured a kick-up that was quite attractive. Interior trim was greatly upgraded and there was more exterior brightwork as well. The base engine was the 196-cu.in., 111-hp Comanche four-cylinder. A new 150-hp AMC 258-cu.in. straight-six was optional, along with two V-8 options, the IH 304- and 345-cu.in. engines good for 193 hp and 196.7 hp, respectively. The larger, handsomer, more powerful Scout II was apparently what the public was looking for because sales rose sharply.

Scout II got a handsome new split grille for 1973, and the line was upgraded with the 258-cu.in. six-cylinder engine now standard equipment. The reason International was using the AMC straight-six rather than its own was simple: The AMC engine cost less and was better suited to passenger-car usage than IH's own low-revving sixes. The AMC engine had seven main bearings, weighed less, and was known for its silence, smoothness and

excellent power. Model year 1974 brought further upgrades including tilt steering wheel and power front disc brake options. Four-wheel-drive Scout IIs for 1974 received a new "silent drive" transfer case.

But in the meantime, sales of International's other light trucks collapsed in the face of intensified competition and an on-going fuel crunch, and so the decision was made to abandon the light-truck market, with the exception of the Scout II.

Trying to offset some of the loss of the senior truck lines, the Scout line for 1975 added two longer 118-inch-wheelbase models: the Terra midsize pickup and the Traveler sport-utility wagon. The midsize Terra was an especially nice product, smaller and more economical than fullsize trucks. At the time it was unique in the market. The Traveler station wagon offered more interior room than the standard Scout, along with decent fuel economy. The regular 100-inch-wheelbase Scout II

added a new Sunburst Yellow XLC four-wheel-drive model loaded with roof rack, wheel discs, and plenty of chrome trim.

During 1976, a Nissan diesel engine became optional, providing gobs of torque and excellent fuel economy. That year, the U.S. Ski Team chose Scout as its official vehicle for the Winter Olympics in Austria. International prepared the team a special group of Scouts with white exterior paint and two stripes, a thick blue lower and thinner red upper, emblazoned along the sides, with the team logo just ahead of the doors and a roof-mounted ski rack. Because America was celebrating its 200th anniversary that year, the company offered the same color scheme, minus the Olympic emblem, as the limited-edition "Scout Spirit." However, while the Olympic Scout was a hardtop, the Spirit featured a blue denim-look full-length soft-top, plus Wedgewood Blue interior trim, sports steering wheel, and chrome slotted wheels with Goodyear Tracker tires.

After 16 years in production, Scout was due for an all-new replacement. Trouble was, sales volumes weren't high enough to justify the extreme tooling expense that would be involved. Undaunted, company designers worked on a replacement utilizing a mostly carryover Scout chassis with a lightweight plastic



Scout II got a new grille for 1977, but few other appearance changes. Exterior sport decals kept it looking fresh in a market that was red-hot for SUVs.





Introduced in January 1977, the Scout SS model was aimed directly at the hot-selling Jeep CJ. Black plastic panels helped finish off the door openings while providing a tough “off-roader” appearance.

Here’s the Scout line in its final year, 1980. Still an attractive line of vehicles, included were Scout II, Terra, and Traveler models. This was the only year for rectangular headlamps.

body to boost fuel economy and slash tooling costs. Before long, a two-door Scout concept model with a fastback roof was constructed to illustrate the idea, and it received good reviews from most people who were shown it.

The 1977 Scouts got new grilles, along with a sharp new Scout SS II model, a topless, door-less sport utility vehicle with black plastic overlays on the door openings for an aggressive look. An optional soft-top and doors were available. Although Scout had been challenging Jeep ever since it first arrived, the new Scout SS was the most direct threat to the venerable CJ yet—and it was a very nice package.

Scout received few changes for 1978, just a slightly different grille and new stripes. This year, International put the experimental fiberglass Scout on public display, bringing it to cities around the country to gauge public reaction to it. Scout carried over into 1979 with some stylish new trim and improved upholstery.

Then, for 1980, came a more modern look, a new grille flanked by rectangular headlamps. Two-wheel-drive models were dropped, and power steering became standard equipment along with a new, smaller-diameter steering wheel. The



optional Nissan diesel got a turbocharger for increased power. Two new trim packages were shown: the RS and the 844. The RS featured Tahitian Red exterior paint, a plush interior, and styled steel wheels. The value-priced Scout 844’s designation stood for eight-cylinder engine, four-speed

transmission, and four-wheel drive. Both models were proposals and reportedly only a few were built. A third model, built in prototype form only, became the hottest Scout ever. The “Shawnee Scout” was put together by supplier Hurst Performance. Powered by a potent 345-cu.in. four-barrel V-8, only three prototypes were produced. In an effort to spur lagging sales, the company began offering a 100,000-mile engine and anti-corrosion warranty on all Scouts.

Due to a major strike in its factories, International’s 1980 fiscal year was extremely bad. The company reported an operating loss of \$397 million. In an effort to reduce overhead, a decision was made to discontinue the Scout. The company tried to sell the vehicle line to another firm but when the deal fell through that marked the end for Scout. 🏠

In its final year, Scout offered this rarely seen 844 model. The numbers stood for “eight cylinders, four-speed transmission, and four-wheel drive.”

The most exciting Scout of all time—the Hurst-prepared Shawnee Scout for 1980. Powered by the big 345-cu.in. V-8; only three examples were built.







# The Society of Automotive Historians

*For 50 years, this organization has researched and promoted the understanding of automotive history*

BY MARK J. McCOURT • PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY THE SOCIETY OF AUTOMOTIVE HISTORIANS



**A**utomotive history has been written every single day since the first person dreamed of a vehicle that moved under its own power. Much of that history would have gone by, unrecognized, unrecorded, and never shared, had it not been for efforts by members of the Society of Automotive Historians. That group, now 800 strong and this year celebrating its founding a half-century ago, is owed a nearly unimaginable debt, for its collective work has enabled the very magazine you're reading right now, and every other serious automotive publication that has informed and entertained readers for the past six decades or more.

Let's travel to that world-famous classic-car destination of Hershey, specifically to the Antique Automobile Club of America's annual Fall Meet. Since the mid-1950s, this Pennsylvania town has been a gathering place for hobby diehards, and, in October 1969, it became the nucleus for this country's most dedicated automotive

historians; this was where the Society of Automotive Historians—SAH, for short—was officially formed, and where the group returns every year.

In the 1960s, there were a small number of authors, researchers, and enthusiasts located here and abroad, who largely worked independently to broaden the scope of automotive knowledge. It was primarily through the publications of venerable clubs like the AACA and Vintage (née Veteran) Motor Car Club of America that those serious car historians connected. In the early months of 1969, two prescient men—printer Richard Brigham and chemical engineer G. Marshall Naul—decided to see if there was enough interest to form an organization. They compiled a list of historians, mailing letters asking if such an interest existed. Happily, they received a largely positive response.

"Before the SAH was formed, things were pretty grim," recalls founding member William "Bill" Jackson. "We were all 'car guys,' coming from many different

directions—academics, antique car collectors, people who were writing articles for publications that existed at that time. I was a sports car racer in the 1950s who got interested in the history of the companies that built the cars I was racing. I got a master's degree in journalism, having conned my thesis committee into letting me do my thesis on the history of automotive journalism in the United States. I'd started buying books and collecting literature on cars that interested me, and found I already had a better collection of automotive books than our library at Penn State did. This frustrated me: The final product of better than 40 percent of basic industry in this country—coal, steel, gas, rubber—was the automobile. And yet it wasn't considered a legitimate field of study."

Bill remembers the line of thinking that motivated Brigham and Naul to act: "We were about to lose the last of the first generation of the automobile industry in this country. We damned well better start preserving it or it would disappear



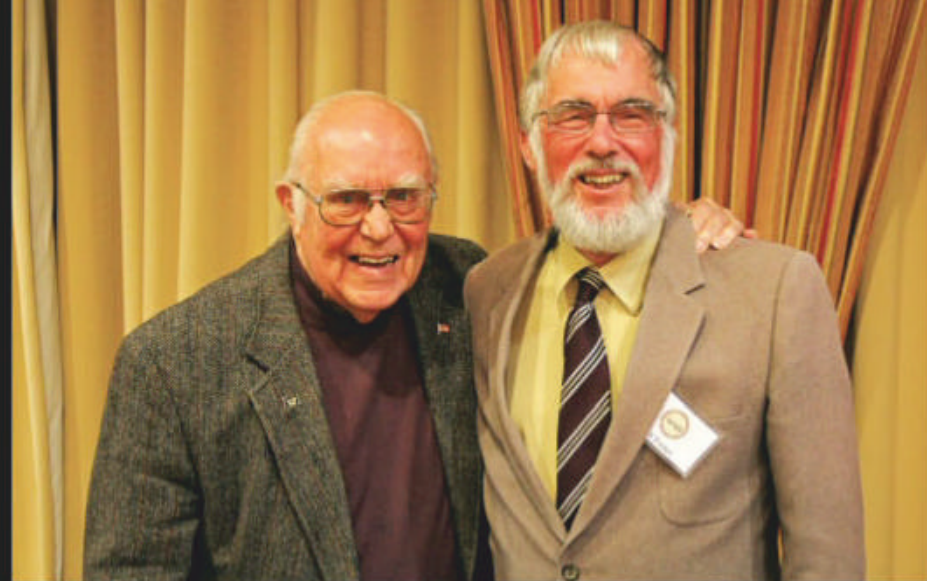
# SAH Journal



ISSUE 260

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**From left:**  
Dr. Fred Simeone  
accepted the  
2013 SAH Friend  
of Automotive  
History Award from  
John Heitmann; at  
the 2018 awards  
banquet, founder  
Bill Jackson joined  
Kit Foster; president  
Louis Fourie spoke.

forever.” As the editor of the AACA’s *Antique Automobile* magazine since 1962, he’d had his own chance to help save that history when he befriended the aged daughters of Charles Duryea, and ensured their pioneering father’s papers and photographs went to a museum, rather than ending up in the trash bin.

Hershey Fall Meet—actually Bill’s office at AACA headquarters—would be the central meeting point for the small group of founding members, all of whom shared a mutual interest of preserving the history of the automobile in America. (He quips that he was treated to membership number 2 because he and wife Rosemary provided donuts for that first meeting.) Since then, the SAH has always gathered during Hershey, and maintained a tent in the swap meet that has been a gathering point. And while socializing has always played a role, this organization got down to business right away.

“One of the earliest tasks was what we called the ‘List Committee,’” Bill explains. “We were trying to create an authentic list of all the cars made in this country, by whom, where, and when.” This was in response to a 5,000-entry list compiled by the Automobile Manufacturers Association that was, in places, incomplete or incorrect. Thirty-seven-year SAH member Christopher “Kit” Foster, whose byline

will be familiar to longtime *Special Interest Autos* readers, chimes in: “This eventually became *The Standard Catalog of American Cars 1805-1942*, written by Beverly Rae Kimes and Henry Austin Clark Jr.”

Kit tells us how the Society’s publications that he once edited—the bimonthly *The SAH Journal* and its more in-depth, scholarly counterpart, the semi-annual *Automotive History Review*—would come



The annual SAH tent at the Hershey Fall Meet is a lively gathering place where you can purchase books and have them autographed by their authors, enjoy some refreshments, or just have an intelligent conversation about automotive history while resting your feet.





College of Charleston students presented automotive-themed papers during the 2018 Drive History conference at Bulgari's NB Center.

to contain fascinating articles written after deep, often primary, research into unusual topics that include little-known orphan marques, pioneering executives, automotive inventions, and much more. Through their decades of publication, these SAH titles have earned widespread respect for advancing the body of automotive knowledge, being considered legitimate outlets for the dissemination of never-before-published works by academic historians and senior industry insiders, and this honor reflects positively upon the SAH, as a whole.

"In 1996, we organized the first of many biennial history conferences, teaming with the National Association of Automotive Museums on them until 2010. More recently we've joined with the Historic Vehicle Association [North America's representative of the *Fédération Internationale des Véhicules Anciens*, the International Federation of Historic Vehicle Organizations] and cohosted two International Drive History Conferences at Nicola Bulgari's NB Center for American Automotive Heritage in Allentown," Kit explains. The next edition of this conference, April 11-13, will honor the SAH's golden anniversary, and participants can drive some of Bulgari's exquisite prewar cars.

For more than 30 years, the SAH has also encouraged the study of automotive history through its famous annual awards program; indeed, *Hemmings Classic Car* received its Richard and Grace Brigham Award in 2007, *SIA* having done so in 1992. The Brigham Award, which represents the finest editorial, graphic, or historical maga-

zine treatment published in the previous year, is just one of this organization's prizes. Current SAH president Louis Fourie offers other highlights: "We take a lot of pride in the Richard P. Sarchburg award, because that recognizes articles written by university students, which brings young people into automotive history.

"The Friend of Automotive History award is our most significant award for an individual, recognizing someone who's made exceptional contributions to automotive history," he continues. "The Nicolas-Joseph Cugnot Award is our top book award, and we not only recognize the author, but the publisher who brought that book to market. We have awards for individual articles in magazines, as well as one recognizing works in media other than print. We try to cater to a wide range of recipients, so about every form of automotive history is covered."

We asked Louis, a former General Motors Overseas Operations employee, about the role of SAH president, a two-year term that has previously been filled by automotive history luminaries including the aforementioned Beverly Rae Kimes (whose vice president was SAH founding member Henry Austin Clark Jr.), *SIA* founding editor Michael Lamm, longtime *Hemmings Motor News/SIA* editor David Brownell, and noted steam-car historian Susan Davis. "Each president has brought his or her own special interest," he muses. "I felt our website catered to North American products. To the extent that we have members in more than 20 countries, I immediately set about chang-

ing that." Perusing this organization's ever-expanding links page [[autohistory.org/links-to-online-automotive-history-resources](http://autohistory.org/links-to-online-automotive-history-resources)], it's obvious that Louis and his colleagues have succeeded in their quest to span the breadth of the international automotive world.

That key part of the Society's website is generously open to everyone, but members—holders of both regular and student memberships, and lower-cost, digital-only memberships—have access to still more special content that includes digital archives of every past SAH publication; more than 6,000 high-resolution images of international automobiles for member use in publication; and a Membership Directory that is searchable by name, location, or areas of interest, the latter being helpful in finding others who share your pursuit.

"The varied interests of the Society is one of the most appealing aspects of it. There's not a clubby nature to our group; we all enjoy each other's company immensely because it's a constant source of learning," Louis says. "The knowledge of our membership is absolutely staggering." He recalls hearing some believed SAH membership was by invitation-only, and resolutely refutes that. "That indicates we're something to aspire to, which is great, but we welcome everyone with a sincere interest in automotive history at any level to join. Come into our tent at Hershey and you'll be welcomed by a group of people who can talk intelligently about whatever you're interested in. You'll find us to be a resource you wonder how you've done without." 🗨️





# Fancied Ford

*After a lifetime hauling dynamite, a 1924 Model T Ford is restored and reinterpreted*

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MIKE McNESSOR • RESTORATION PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAN SHIELDS

There are frills on modern trucks that would've been unimaginable just a few decades ago (We're looking at you, power retracting running boards). But there's a serious emphasis on utility today, too. New trucks are more powerful than ever for hauling and towing, yet easier on a gallon of gas. They drive down the highway like big sedans, yet remain capable off road. They're also loaded with neat places to store stuff and offer options that make life on the job site easier than ever.

But what if we were to travel back in time to the real no-frills days—say, almost 100 years ago—and build a prewar interpretation of today's light-duty trucks? A plush but practical light hauler that used

the technology and materials available at the time. What would it look like?

Chances are, it would look very much like the truck seen here: a 1924 Ford Model T coupe, converted into a pickup and outfitted with a custom bed crafted like a piece of furniture. There'd be wool upholstery, wall-to-wall carpeting, and an accessory tilting steering wheel on the inside. On the outside, there'd be built-in toolboxes, as well as sturdy bars and racks for material handling—all made out of deluxe oak and walnut.

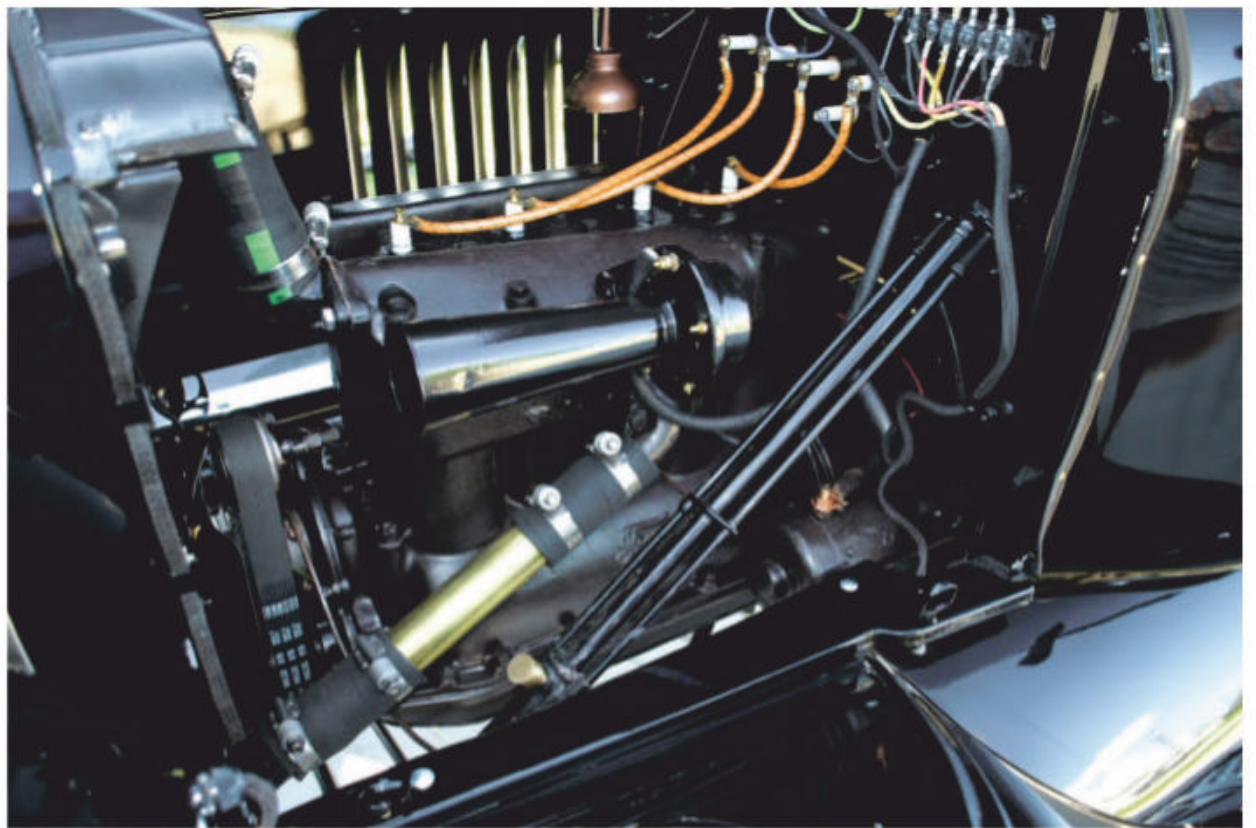
Now, before you start firing off angry letters and emails about the tragedy of sacrificing a nice passenger car to build yet another pickup (also the current business model of U.S. automakers), you

should know that this Model T coupe was converted to a truck long before its current owner and restorer, 74-year-old Dan Shields, was even born.

Dan, a serial Model T builder and enthusiast hailing from Upper Sandusky, Ohio, came upon this truck-ified Ford T by chance when he was asked to appraise it for the family of the late owner in 2017. "I received a call from a man who said his mother-in-law passed away, she was 103 years old, and she had this Model T in her garage that had been there since back in the 1950s," Dan said. "The family was trying to settle the estate and wanted to know its value."

This is Dan's third Model T, another of which is a 1923 TT commercial truck





Interesting details abound on this Model T, like the accessory Ford oil can under the hood, oil and gas cans in the running board luggage carrier, and the oak toolbox that conceals a battery maintainer and some basic hand tools.



that we featured back in our April 2017 issue. He's a retired home builder, not an appraiser, but he knows his way around Tin Lizzies. "I agreed to go to look—it was inside this little garage probably built in the teens or '20s. I walked in and saw it sitting there with 60 years of dust and dirt on it. The critters had pretty much taken over the interior, and I noticed it had a professionally installed, very well built bed on the back. After doing a lot of research on the vehicle, I found it had been purchased by National Quarries, in Carey, Ohio, supposedly to haul dynamite."

Though the Model T had been neglected, it had solid bones and all of its parts were present and accounted for. "It was sitting on a stone and dirt floor, the



tires were all flat—it takes a little imagination to see the potential when looking at something like that,” Dan said. “But I was thinking, it’s in pretty good shape. There was virtually no rust, but it needed a complete restoration.”

So, Dan offered the family his appraisal of the T’s value and backed it with a guarantee: “I gave them a price and told them if they decided to sell, I would pay them that much for it. About two weeks later, they called and asked me to come get it.”

With the old Ford back at his shop, Dan started using his imagination to envision the style bed he might’ve built himself all those decades ago when the T was converted to a truck. Years back, he’d cut down some hardwood trees on his property and had the wood sawn into rough-cut boards, which he’d stashed away. Those would be the focal point of the project. “We’d cut down an oak tree in our front yard that was about 250 years old when it died,” Dan said. “I had it cut up into rough-sawn lumber and took it out to my shop and stacked it. It was probably sitting for 20-25 years. I also had some walnut left over.”

Dan sketched a bed inspired by the accessories on deluxe modern work trucks, like a headache rack at the rear of the cab (to protect the back window from sliding cargo) and toolboxes on the sides. He then turned over his drawing, and his lumber, to local Amish craftsmen who scratch-built the one-of-a-kind body.



Back at his shop, Dan removed the T’s cab and body panels, then blasted off the remaining paint with a power washer. The chassis was sandblasted, while the engine and transmission were sent to Joe Bell in Tiffin, Ohio, for rebuilding.

The black paint on the cab and fenders was applied by a local body shop, but Dan painted the frame and chassis hard parts himself. The wheel spokes were fashioned out of hickory by Amish wheelwrights, and the interior was finished with an upholstery kit installed by an Amish tarp shop.

With the finished parts rolling back into his garage by the spring of 2018, Dan set a tight deadline for the T’s reassembly: He wanted it finished in time to roll onto the show field at the Hemmings Concours

September 16, in Lake George, New York. “After I’d entered it in the concours, I thought, now I have to get this thing done,” he said. “I’d work on it like I was going to work. I’d go to the shop at 8 a.m., and if I wasn’t home by 5 p.m. my wife would come looking for me. I figure I have about 1,000 hours in it.”

Dan finished his Model T in time to trailer it more than 600 miles to Lake George and join our hotly contested Vintage Trucks class. He shows it locally these days, driving it when possible, and says it has the best road manners of his three Model Ts. “I could take this on a tour,” he said. “I’ll trailer it to shows and drive it one or two blocks to avoid traffic, but I’d have no trouble taking it on a 100-mile trip.” 🚚







The interior is plenty plush by 1920s commercial truck standards, sporting wool upholstery and an accessory tilting walnut steering wheel. The Model T's gas tank—a new replacement—is concealed beneath the passenger's-side seat cushion.



After about 60 years in storage, the Model T was dirty but solid and intact. The conversion from car to truck was performed when the T was new or nearly new.



The bed was removed to make way for something more elaborate. How the T's original trunk was cut off remains a mystery, but the workmanship was very neat.



A thorough power washing removed decades of grease and grime as well as most of the truck's paint, leaving the original primer in place on the doors and other panels.



Amish craftsmen fashioned new wood framing for the Model T's roof, which was later covered with correct cobra-grain fabric.



The bed was built out of oak and walnut, designed by the owner and fabricated by Amish cabinetmakers using wood from a tree that once stood in the owner's yard.



Gloss black enamel, applied by a local body shop made the truck's body shine better than new. Very little work was necessary.



The owner refinished the chassis in his shop and hired Amish wheelwrights to recondition the wheels, installing new hickory spokes.





PRECISION

PERF





# FORMER

*Lancia's superbly engineered 1967 Flaminia 3C 2.8 offers a superb open-air driving experience*

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY TERRY SHEA





**F**ounded in 1906 by its namesake Vincenzo Lancia, Lancia & C. Fabbrica Automobili pioneered many firsts in the industry: the first V-4 and V-6 engines commercially produced, the first unibody chassis, the first independent front suspension, the first five-speed gearbox, and so on. Though rarely clothed in bodywork that anyone would call stunning, Lancias were, instead, engineered to a far higher standard than their price point would indicate.

Talk Lancias with anyone in the know, and the conversation quickly turns to how well engineered the cars were. We spoke with Santo Spadaro, who runs Dominick European Car Repair in White Plains, New York, along with his brother Frank and sister Vera. In the greater New York City area, Dominick (named by and for their father when he founded the business decades ago) is the go-to place for vintage Italian repair. Lancia, among other less-common makes, is a specialty at Dominick.

When asked what makes Lancias so special, Santo is quick to respond, saying, "Going right back to the Lambda [the first unibody production car] and the Aprilia and certainly the Aurelia and then the Flaminia, Lancias were historically made by outside-the-box-thinking engineers, and they came up with what, at the time, were radical solutions to engineering problems." The Aurelia, which debuted in 1950, came packed with innovations: the first production V-6, the first production car sold with radial tires, and a rear transaxle that combined transmission, differential, clutch, and the inboard-mounted brakes into one relatively compact unit. The Aurelia was sold as a sedan, coupe, roadster, and convertible, and became a darling of racers as it proved competitive in one of its first outings, finishing second in the 1951 Mille Miglia to a V-12-powered Ferrari America. Lancia knew how to engineer a winner.

"They combined original thought with the tried-and-true, and anytime you step into a Lancia and you compare it to any other car of its era, you always feel like you're driving a car that

is 10 or 15 years newer than its build date. When you drive a 1936 Aprilia, you almost feel like you're driving a car from the Fifties. It handles like a modern car. It accelerates. It does everything like a modern car. The Flaminia drives as solid and true as a car 10 or 15 years beyond it." Not only do they fix Lancias at Dominick, but they also drive them, as Santo's family owns the hardtop two-door counterpart to the car featured on these pages.

The Flaminia was, in many ways, an evolution of the Aurelia, which remained in production from 1950 to 1958, a decade during which engineering advances came at a rapid pace. By the time Aurelia production ceased, its sliding-kingpin front suspension was getting "long in the tooth," as Santo points out, so the engineers designed what by then was a more conventional double-wishbone front suspension for the Flaminia. With disc brakes already pioneered by Jaguar and Crosley, Lancia quickly got on that bandwagon, equipping the Flaminia with four-wheel discs.

Our feature car, a 1967 Flaminia 3C 2.8 convertible, was sold originally in France near the end of the Flaminia's long 1957 to 1970 production run. Lancia offered the Flaminia in five different body styles. The 113-inch-wheelbase "Berlina" (Italian for sedan) came directly from Lancia's own factory, but three other carrozzerias also assembled Flaminia variants, and all on a shortened 99-inch wheelbase.











In addition to styling the Berlina, Pininfarina designed and built a 2+2 coupe while Zagato built the Sport, a svelte, curvy sensation (later Super Sport when equipped with the larger V-6) with all of that coachbuilder's usual signatures, such as the double-bubble roof. Carrozzeria Touring built two models: the Grand Touring 3C coupe (GT) and the 3C convertible. Touring also built a small number of slightly longer wheelbase hardtop GTL models.

All Flaminias, even the Berlina, had a long, narrow scoop on the hood, giving at least some nod to the model's sporting intentions. Under that long scoop sat a V-6 engine, at a time when such a layout was a rarity. Initially, the all-aluminum alloy, overhead-valve, pushrod V-6 displaced 2.5 liters—same as in the

final iteration of the Aurelia—and made 102 to 110 horsepower in the sedan and 119 horsepower in the two-door models. A special three-carb version made 140 horsepower.

Lancia's 2.8-liter version of the V-6 debuted in 1962, offering 128 horsepower in the Berlina, 136 hp in the Pininfarina Coupe, and 150 hp in the GT, GTL, Convertible, and Zagato Sport. Slightly oversquare, with an 85-mm bore and an 81.5-mm stroke, the Flaminia's engine displaces 2,775 cc, features 9.0 compression, and breathes through three Weber two-barrel carburetors: one 35 DCNL1 in the middle of a pair of 35 DCNL carbs. Lancia rated the engine's torque at 165 lb-ft, with its engineers specifying cast-iron cylinder liners for the longevity of the all-alloy block.

A driveshaft sends power at engine speed to the rear-mounted, four-speed transaxle, which is also located by a De Dion tube, a development adopted by Lancia during the latter years of Aurelia production to replace the previous swing-axle setup. Front suspension includes double wishbones with coil springs, hydraulic shocks, and an anti-sway bar. Manual worm-and-roller steering gearbox operates on a 20.4:1 ratio.

Although the Berlina and Pininfarina Coupe both had all-steel bodies, Touring Carrozzeria used its patented Superleggera construction technique for the GT and Convertible styles: an aluminum body on a steel-tube frame built on top of Lancia's steel floorpan. At 3,086 pounds, the Flaminia convertible is hardly "super light," but it at least has some verve with its free-revving V-6 engine.

In fact, it is only that somewhat low power-to-weight ratio, compared to perhaps some more sporting contemporary cars like a Jaguar E-type, an Aston Martin DB5, or any number of Ferraris, that owner Don Schwarzkopf can point to as any sort of demerit to the car. And he finds that, once again, Lancia engineering had the perfect solution. "I think the gearing is very well chosen in the Lancia," Don explains. "That said, it's not really a performance car, and not intended as such. To drive it is very pleasant. Older convertibles are so different from modern convertibles in the sense that they're much more open, much less safety conscious.

## SPECIFICATIONS

<b>ENGINE</b>	.....OHV V-6; ALUMINUM BLOCK AND CYLINDER HEADS
<b>DISPLACEMENT</b>	.....2,775 CC (169.3-CU.IN.)
<b>HORSEPOWER @ RPM</b>	.....150 @ 5,400
<b>TORQUE @ RPM</b>	.....165 LB-FT @ 3,500
<b>FUEL SYSTEM</b>	.....TWO WEBER 35 DCNL AND ONE WEBER
	.....35 DCNL1 TWO-BARREL CARBURETORS
<b>TRANSMISSION</b>	.....REAR-MOUNTED, FOUR-SPEED MANUAL TRANSAXLE
<b>SUSPENSION</b>	.....FRONT: UNEQUAL-LENGTH CONTROL ARMS,
	.....COIL SPRINGS, HYDRAULIC SHOCKS, ANTI-SWAY BAR;
	.....REAR: DE DION REAR AXLE, LEAF SPRINGS, HYDRAULIC SHOCKS
<b>STEERING</b>	.....WORM-AND-ROLLER; 20.4:1 RATIO
<b>BRAKES</b>	.....FOUR-WHEEL DUNLOP DISCS (REAR INBOARD)
<b>WHEELBASE</b>	.....99.2 IN
<b>WEIGHT</b>	.....3,086 LB
<b>0-60 MPH</b>	.....10.5 SEC
<b>STANDING ¼-MILE</b>	.....17.6 SEC @ 78 MPH
<b>TOP SPEED</b>	.....118 MPH

\* SOURCE: *SPORTS CAR GRAPHIC*, JUNE 1962 TEST OF A 1962 LANCIA FLAMINIA 3C CONVERTIBLE WITH THE 140-HP, 2.5-LITER V-6





With three Weber carburetors, Lancia's compact V-6 makes good power for its size. The Lancia engineering way includes organized, clearly labeled wiring, albeit in Italian.







*The Flaminia convertible is certainly optimal for when you're relaxed ... and you're touring through some beautiful countryside.*

You really get more of a feeling of being out in the elements."

Don found his car at an auction in Paris about eight years ago. It was what he likes to call a "chateau find" rather than a barn find, as the car came out of the basement of a prominent collector, whose family was selling his collection following his passing. Don bought the Flaminia, which was not running at the time and somewhat moldy inside, and had it immediately shipped to Omicron Engineering, the world-renowned Lancia specialist in the U.K. Omicron proceeded to conduct a ground-up restoration; the project was completed in the U.S. with the fitting of new upholstery and convertible top. Don shares that the restoration was "everything that I hoped it would be. It was a more complex and more expensive restoration than I anticipated because of the nature of the car and the way in which it was built."

With the proof in the driving, Don shares what is usually his seat with us, offering a drive through the hills of eastern New York and southwest Vermont near the Hemmings offices on a warm fall afternoon.

The very first impression of getting into the Lancia, once we slide under the big steering wheel, is just how much room there is. While not a flat-floor car, there is no transmission tunnel taking up room between the driver and passenger, only a low,

stamped passage there for the driveshaft from the engine to the transaxle. It's an airy and relaxing environment, as opposed to what it feels like climbing down and into a modern convertible built for safety first, with style and open-air motoring lower down the priority list.

The Jaeger gauges are laid out rather simply, with two main round dials (car speed left and engine speed right) inset with secondary gauges for fuel level and oil pressure; oil and water temperature inset on the speedometer; and a clock with the tachometer. With the wheelwells far forward—unlike the typical Alfa Romeo of the period that usually requires a rightward shift in the lower half of the body—the Lancia also offers a ton of room for the feet, making the three pedals easy to engage without having my feet crash into each other.

Don warns us beforehand that the Lancia needs to be driven like an Italian car, not a British one. Translation: You need more rpm to make it go. The car kind of loafs below 3,000 rpm, but once above 3,500, it really comes alive and the V-6 sounds great—particularly as we hear everything with the top down—revving right on up to 5,000 rpm, after which we soon back off, despite the engine feeling ready to keep on going.

The shift lever, with a small knob on top, is rather long, the throws being somewhat long as well, at least on the fore-to-aft direction; side to side, the movement is fairly narrow. It takes almost no time getting comfortable with matching revs while shifting up and down. While the steering is vague on center—but nothing like a typical American sedan from the Sixties—the narrow radials do a pretty good job of taming the pavement with no complaints.

With new leather on the seats, new carpets, and everything else about it still restoration perfect, the fall afternoon beckons us to keep on motoring, almost relaxed, even as we need to get into the higher-rpm range at times to keep the speed up. We are being egged on by a 51-year-old jewel of a car that seems to be saying "Let's just keep on going for the next five states or so." The setting sun and our short loan don't help matters, but if we could think of a time, place, and emotion to freeze the clock at, choosing that Flaminia 2.8 on those country roads in that season in the afternoon would be right up on the top of the list.

Don agrees: "I believe cars are so varied that I find myself thinking that each occasion has its optimal car. The Flaminia convertible is certainly optimal for when you're relaxed, when the sun is shining, and you're touring through some beautiful countryside. It's a car that rewards being pressed with very neutral handling, a very nice exhaust note, reasonable power, and a nice, coordinated feel to the mechanical aspects of the car: the steering, the handling, the brakes. It feels of a piece." 🐾











# FACTORY DELIVERY

**"FROM STUTTGART TO PALM CITY: THREE DECADES  
WITH A 1987 PORSCHE 911 CARRERA TARGA"**





BY MARK J. McCOURT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD LENTINELLO

VINCENT PONZO



It's a dream come true for many hardcore imported-car enthusiasts: Pick up your new sports car at the factory and experience it on the roads it was designed for. For a dedicated Porscheophile, that means a trip to the German city of Stuttgart, home of Porsche and Mercedes-Benz, and the chance to drive on the Autobahn. Such an enviable adventure would be the start of a decades-long connection between a 1987 911 Carrera Targa and its owner, and that relationship remains as durable as the largely hand-built car itself.

Vincent Ponzo was driving a Triumph TR4 when he bought his first Porsche in 1969, on impulse. "It was a moment of envy," he admits. "I discovered a coworker driving a 1965 356, and thought, 'He doesn't make more money than I do, why can't I have one?' That same day, I bought a brand new, Bahama Yellow 912, which cost \$5,200. I kept that car for eight years, selling it for \$4,800 in mid-1977, when I bought a new, maroon 924." As he'd done with the 912, this Long Island, New York, native, now living in Palm City, Florida, drove that 924 daily, year-round, until 1986, when a six-cylinder siren caught his eye.

"I was very involved with the Metro New York Region of the Porsche Club of America, and through them, I learned about Porsche's European Delivery Program. It had been quite a while since I bought the 924, and I wanted another new Porsche. This would give us the chance to travel to Europe, and picking the car up in Stuttgart would save me \$4,500," Vincent recalls. "I chose some options when I ordered it through Koepfel Porsche in Queens, and the final cost was \$42,813.58. My wife Carmen and I flew to Germany to get it."

Like Mercedes-Benz, Volvo, BMW, and Saab, Porsche had a long-established tourist delivery program in which American buyers could pick up a new car at the factory, drive it around for a specified period, and after returning it there or leaving it at a designated location, it would be shipped to the U.S. These automakers' programs typically included temporary license plates and road collision insurance, as well as marine insurance that covered the car's trip to North America. Porsche even included airport pick-up, one night's hotel stay, and entry to its museum in Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen—a discount was icing on the cake.

For 1987, Porsche's lineup would include the 924 S, 944, 944 S, and 944 Turbo, the 911 Carrera and 911 Turbo, and the 928 S4, with MSRPs ranging from \$19,900 to \$76,500, a spread that roughly equates to \$44,300-\$170,300 today. It was the air-cooled 1987 911 Carrera—a direct descendant of his 1969 912—that had Vincent's heart. Like the 911 Turbo, the naturally aspirated 911 came in solid-roof Coupe (\$38,500), lift-off-roof panel Targa (\$40,500), and folding soft-top Cabriolet (\$44,500) body styles. He felt the Targa offered the best blend of security





and freedom, noting, “Everything I needed in a car was in this model of Porsche. It was fast, handled extremely well, and had a removable top to be a convertible if I wanted it.”

All Carreras shared a Bosch L-Jetronic fuel-injected SOHC flat-six engine that displaced 3.2 liters (193-cu.in.) through a 95 x 74.4 mm (3.74 x 2.93-in.) bore and stroke. With its 9.5:1 compression ratio, the rear-mounted engine made 214 hp at 5,900 rpm and 195 lb-ft of torque at 4,800 rpm. This power went to the wheels through a new-for-1987 Getrag G50 five-speed manual transaxle and hydraulic clutch, and was reined in with four-wheel disc brakes. The fully independent suspension used torsion bars and anti-roll bars, front and rear. Porsche’s conservative published performance figures for these sub-2,900-pound cars included a 0-60 sprint in 6.1 seconds and a 149-mph top speed, but contemporary enthusiast publications beat those handily.

Raw numbers weren’t Vincent’s goal, although he did spec-

ify upgraded sport shock absorbers and 16-inch Fuchs forged alloy wheels (6-inches front, 7-inches rear, mounting Z-rated 205/55 and 225/50 tires) to replace the standard 15-inch alloys. He also opted for heated front seats, a Blaupunkt Reno AM/FM cassette stereo, an anti-theft alarm, and a factory delete of the engine lid’s “Carrera” script badge, for easier cleaning. Fog lamps and air conditioning were standard equipment, that A/C making the lightweight folding roof panel a surprisingly superfluous item, especially after the couple’s 2006 move to Florida. Also included in this 911, since it was ordered with option code 900 (“Accession of the car at the factory/Export car with catalytic converter”), were the German road-required *warndreieck* (warning triangle reflector) and *kraftwagen-verbandkasten* (automotive first-aid kit).

The Ponzos traveled to Stuttgart in October 1986, and met their U.S.-spec, model-year-1987 911 on the 7th. More than 30 years later, Vincent still remembers that Tuesday well. “We were



Unlike this owner’s other Porsches, this 911 was not daily driven, which kept the mileage low. It was factory-optioned with heated seats and an upgraded stereo.



right next to the factory, and as we waited, we could hear loud banging noises coming from inside. The people were very nice, and picking it up was an experience. A salesman met us in the reception area, and took us upstairs to see the car. As we were in the elevator, he asked, 'Did you ever own one before?' I said, 'Yes, I had a 1969.' He handed me the keys and said, 'It's exactly the same,'" Vincent recalls with a laugh.

They found their crisp, triple-black Targa wearing Germany's distinctive oval-shaped tourist plates; the front one is still displayed on the Porsche today. "He told us some minor information about the car before we took off. We drove around southwestern Germany, through Munich, and to Augsburg, where I was stationed in the Army from 1961 to 1963. I thought I could speak the language from my time in the service, but unbeknownst to me, I knew squat. Once we got on the road, I forgot everything," he says, grinning. "*Einfahrt, Ausfahrt*, the words for left and right. But it was exciting, a lot of fun—we drove around for about two weeks. There was some stress for me, being in a strange country with a valuable car: Wherever we were, I tried to park it so I could see it. But it was like being in paradise, just me and my wife, in our new Porsche. I'd guess we put around 800 miles on it before we brought it back to the factory and flew home from Stuttgart."

Unlike its predecessors in the Ponzo driveway, this Carrera wouldn't be a daily driver. It shared garage space with the '77 924 (modified into a track car), as well as, at various times, a pre-owned 1985 944, 1988 924 S, and European-spec 1979 931, aka 924 Turbo, and Vincent's average of 1,600 miles per year led to the circa-48,000 miles it displays now. It has taken discipline to maintain this modern-classic's originality. "I only used dealer mechanics, and two Porsche fanatics, for services," Vincent tells us. "Because of the mileage, the oil is changed



*“It was like  
being in paradise,  
just me and my wife,  
in our new Porsche.”*

every couple of years. It's never driven in snow or rain. I used a car bra, and side mirror covers to protect the front from stone chips, plus Mothers products for exterior detailing; to maintain the leather, I use Lexol products.

"This car has been very reliable," he continues. "I replaced the original tires due to dry rot, not wear. I had a minor problem when the battery leaked, as some of the protective asphalt coating peeled off the battery tray; I put the same stuff back on it. The only mechanical issue it had happened about a year ago, when I thought I lost my transmission because it wouldn't go into gear. I took it to a Porsche repair expert who said it was not a big deal; he changed three little bushings in the shifter mechanism, and that worked like a charm. It cost maybe \$125 to do that work, and this was the most expensive mechanical repair the 911 needed in 30 years!"

Of course, owning a Porsche is all about the driving experience, and Vincent reports it's still a joy, as he takes it out for short drives or to local shows every week. "You can see out the windows extremely well, it has very light unassisted steering, and it's very responsive—it hugs the road. Compared to my water-cooled Porsches, because of the 911's [rear-biased, vs. 50/50] weight distribution, you have to be more cognizant of what you're doing so it doesn't get tail-happy. I don't abuse it, though. Thirty years ago, I could compete with guys at stoplights, but not anymore—hot hatches will run away from me," he laughs.

While the Targa is a prized possession, its clockwork-like reliability and no-fuss demeanor have allowed Vincent to be generous with it. "Occasionally, I'll have people looking at my car with a young boy or girl in tow, and I'll always open the door and say, 'Why don't you sit in the car? Let Dad take a picture of you!' That's fun, and if someone did that for me when I was younger, I would flip out. It's not gold, but this is a nice car, and I'd like to keep it that way forever." 🐾



This naturally aspirated, fuel-injected 3.2-liter flat-six engine has made a reliable 214 hp, and required no more than oil changes.



## Norb Berres

Machine Tool Technician

### IN THE EARLY 1960s I WAS A STUDENT

in the Engineering School at Marquette University [in Milwaukee, Wisconsin]. During the summer break, I took a job at a small manufacturing company not far from the school. The company was owned by the widow of the founder and run by its vice president and his younger brother, all basically chiefs. I was to be the only Indian at that time. It made my job interesting because I needed to be involved in almost all phases of the company's manufacturing operations. I chose to skip a year of school and stayed at this company, because I was actually learning much more than I would have been learning at school.

I had gotten a fair amount of mechanical experience on my own as a kid, since I bought my first car when I was 12 years old with the money earned from growing an acre of cucumbers and selling them to a pickle company. Back then, my parents had a dairy farm which occupied most of my extra time. During high school, I owned two old Ford coupes; one had a 100-hp Mercury engine, the other received a 1955 Pontiac V-8 that I bought, rebuilt, and installed.

As part of this new job, I was involved in developing new products, one of which was a lead-screw tapping machine component that had a pneumatic rapid advance and retract. I got to tag along occasionally on sales calls as part of my education and to meet the dealers in the company network.

One day, the boss came up to me with an airline ticket and told me I was flying to St. Louis the next morning to work out a problem at Carter Carburetor. Late the next morning, I arrived in St. Louis and met the local dealer representative, and we drove out to the Carter plant. There I met with a rather hostile group of frustrated engineers, electricians, and other reps from the company who had used our components in their rotary index machine. This machine was the only machine dedicated to producing carburetor bodies for a large percentage of General Motors' cars.

They had struggled with this machine for weeks with a flaw that they

were unable to fix, and several auto assembly lines were going to be shut down if they didn't make it work. When they finally contacted our company, they were desperate. After they described the malfunctioning components, it was quite clear to me that they had not followed our electrical schematic and had simply wired a function to the wrong limit switch. Our device was the first lead-screw with a rapid advance and retract, and they were not familiar with making it work. They seemed very offended when I did not take the blame and insisted that they had made a mistake. In a union shop, I was not allowed to touch the machine, so I had to wait for their electrician to come and make the changes.

After several hours of standing around, under the watchful eye of the union steward, lest I lay hands on the machine, the electrician finally came from the far reaches of the factory to help out. He was happy to lend a hand, having been employed on this machine for weeks trying to troubleshoot it. So, I described what was needed, which wires should be moved to which limit switches. He looked at me quizzically, asking how I knew that would work. I suggested he look at the electrical schematic supplied by my company, and notice that the name on the drawing was mine.

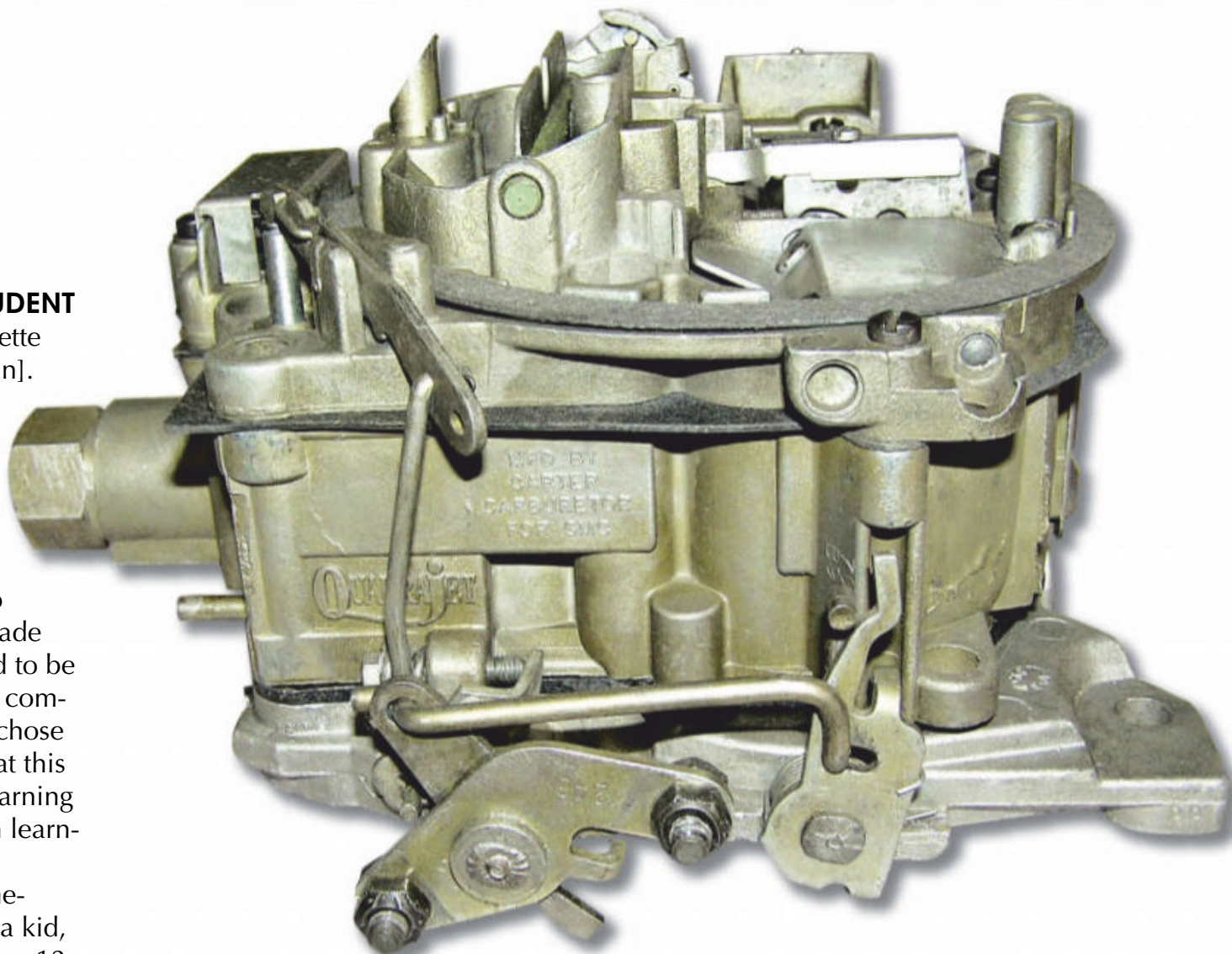
The changes were carefully made,

and I asked that they run the machine to prove it worked. After finding the operator, they began running parts. It worked flawlessly!

Conveying this information to the various vice presidents took a bit, but we gathered in a small office. I was seated in the center of this office while the VPs of several GM divisions and the Carter bosses stood and grilled me on how I knew it was fixed, after all their best people had struggled for a month to find the problem. They pointed out that several car assembly lines were about to be shut down for lack of carburetors. Again, I referred them to the schematic they had failed to follow—mine.

After what seemed like forever, the VPs traded stares and glares, all wondering who to blame. I suggested they run the machine through the weekend to proof it and catch up on production. Meanwhile, I was sure there would be no more delays. And there weren't. What a growth experience that was! 🏆

✿ I Was There relates your stories from working for the carmakers, whether it was at the drawing board, on the assembly line, or anywhere in between. To submit your stories, email us at [editorial@hemmings.com](mailto:editorial@hemmings.com) or write to us at I Was There, c/o Hemmings Classic Car, 222 Main Street, Bennington, Vermont 05201.







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# Pontiac GTOs in the News

## I DIDN'T PLAN ON A FRONT ROW

seat to history, and I certainly didn't plan on driving what arguably is America's first muscle car to every historical event. You see, it all started when I needed a job to pay for my living expenses. I was a young man going to San Francisco State University and studying political science. I was already working both weekend days at a Marina District gas station, but that wasn't enough to pay for rent, food, and transportation with my 1950 Pontiac, which I bought for \$50. A fellow student said that a local rock-n-roll radio station was looking for someone to write traffic reports in the afternoon. It sounded good to me, \$3 per hour was decent money, too; I applied and got the job. Besides working around the DJs and news and sports announcers, an added benefit was occasionally driving two brand-new 1967 Pontiac GTOs. One was a four-speed, the other automatic. Both were so-called trade-outs, where the dealer exchanged the cars for commercial time.

In the beginning, I didn't get a lot of seat time in either car. After the morning shift, I quickly hurried to school, taking 15-plus units each semester. Soon, things got busy in the Bay Area, like the rest of the nation. There was student and racial unrest, at S.F. State, U.C. Berkeley, and on the streets of San Francisco, Berkeley, and Oakland. I was thrust into the middle of the social vortex driving the newscasters to rallies, news conferences, confrontations, and riots. The GTOs served us well with two not-so-minor exceptions. The first was an overheating problem—those Pontiac models were being used in ways they were not designed for.

Each car had a two-way radio for broadcasting. A newscaster would record the event on a reel-to-reel tape recorder, then rush into the car to broadcast the description and the tape recording. That meant a lot of idling while he wrote the copy and went on the air. Those GTOs didn't like idling for sometimes a half hour or more. The second problem, as you can see in the ad here, was the paint scheme, because you don't want to stand out while driving through the streets during a riot. Slapping the station call letters on the door panels may be a good idea to promote

your presence, but it wasn't while navigating through National Guard troops, speeding by over-tired police officers, and interviewing very angry citizens. Bottles, rocks, chairs, nuts, bolts, and, on one notable occasion, a couple of small caliber rounds came our way. Nothing hit except for some bottles that took out one of the cruisers' rear windows. I shudder to think now how stupid and lucky we are to be here today. I have a vivid memory of a television cameraman's Mercedes sedan turned over, in flames, in the middle of San Francisco, with the cameraman running for his life.

But I didn't only witness unrest behind the wheel of those GTOs. This was San Francisco in the '60s after all. The station sponsored the "Magic Mountain Music Festival," a musical event on Marin County's Mt. Tamalpais. Forty thousand people got to see many of the greatest rock-n-roll acts of the time perform over two days. And we broadcasted descriptions of the event from the seats of those GTOs. Two weeks after that festival, we attended the famous Monterey Pop Festival, where the music world discovered Janis Joplin, The Mamas and the Papas, and dozens of other acts. There were also too many to mention "Be-In's" in Golden Gate Park and shows at the Fillmore and other ballrooms.

Then there were sporting events. The sports director was broadcasting San Francisco Warriors (they weren't Golden State Warriors yet) and the Seals hockey team using the GTOs to carry much of the equipment. That was a real sweet assignment.

In a year or so, the GTOs were used

up, and the station traded them in on a set of 1968 Plymouth Barracudas. They were great cars, but they weren't GTOs. I eventually moved on to another "all news" radio station in the market, then to a television station where I stayed for 28 years before retiring from the business in 2005. I've driven a lot of cars and trucks during my four-plus decades writing and broadcasting news, but nothing can match the few years I spent in the '60s driving those Pontiac GTOs.

As to the attached photograph, it was a newspaper ad for the station in 1967. That's me on the right with the corduroy jacket. Four of us in that photo still get together for lunch about once a year and reminisce about the old times and how the business has changed. There's very little left that's good in radio today, and certainly nothing approaching riding around in a muscle car while getting paid. 🎧





# CONCOURS D'ELEGANCE

Hemmings Motor News

13th Annual

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## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th

Registration & Rally

## SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th

- CRUISE-IN SPECTACULAR
- CELEBRATORY BANQUET  
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## SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th

- CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE  
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and *Hemmings Classic Car*.



## MASTER OF CEREMONIES: Bill Rothermel

Bill's broad knowledge and experience as an automotive historian and writer – as well as his role as master of ceremonies or judge in over 20 concours-level events nationwide – position him as an unrivaled expert. He's also a valued member of the Boards of Directors of the AACA Museum in Hershey, PA, and the Elegance at Hershey, and a past-Board member of the Rolls-Royce Foundation and the Boyertown Museum of Historic Vehicles. His lifelong interest in cars of all kinds and eras makes him a fascinating automotive commentator.

## ENTER YOUR SHOW CAR IN THE SUNDAY CONCOURS:

Submit photos to: [concours@hemmings.com](mailto:concours@hemmings.com)

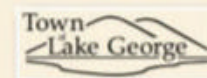
Open to concours-quality, pre-1974 collector cars, by invitation only.

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Early SUVs thru 1978 (Bronco, Blazer, Scout,  
Jeep, Ramcharger, etc.)  
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## SALES RACE

(total model-year production)

1. Ford .....	2,096,383	6. Oldsmobile .....	634,981
2. Chevrolet .....	1,644,229	7. Dodge .....	532,657
3. Plymouth .....	747,508	8. Mercury .....	324,716
4. Pontiac .....	690,953	9. AMC .....	242,664
5. Buick .....	666,501	10. Cadillac .....	238,744

## CHAMPIONS

Indy 500 .....	Al Unser (155.749 mph)
Daytona 500 .....	Pete Hamilton (149.601 mph)
F1 .....	Jochen Rindt (45 points)

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Chrysler .....	\$4,554 - \$5,842
Corvette .....	\$5,129 - \$5,469
Dodge .....	\$2,468 - \$4,242
Ford .....	\$1,995 - \$3,720
Imperial .....	\$5,779 - \$5,956
Lincoln .....	\$5,976 - \$7,281
Mercury .....	\$2,473 - \$4,219
Oldsmobile .....	\$2,676 - \$5,023
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Pontiac .....	\$2,670 - \$4,305

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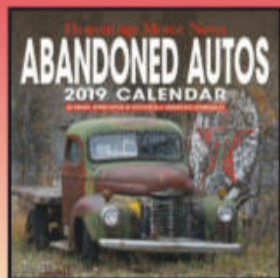
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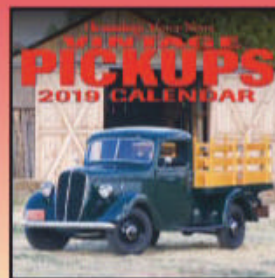
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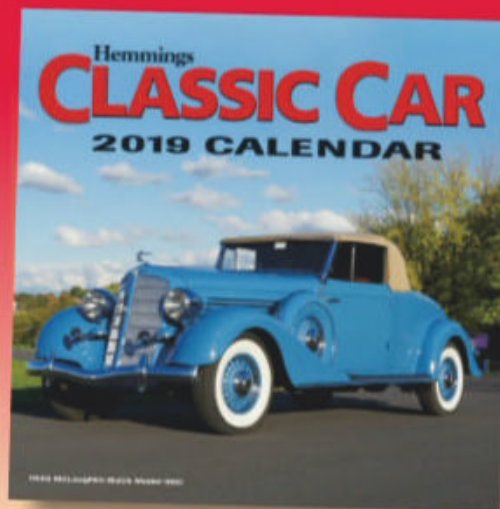
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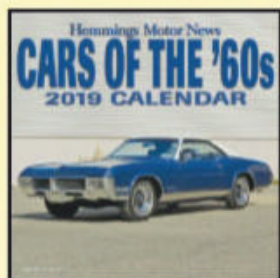
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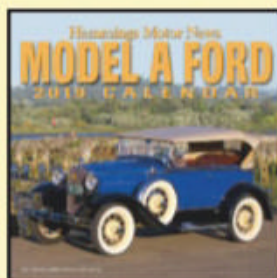
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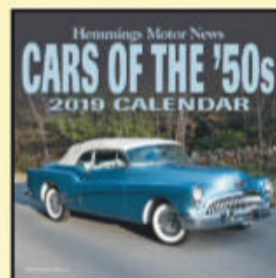
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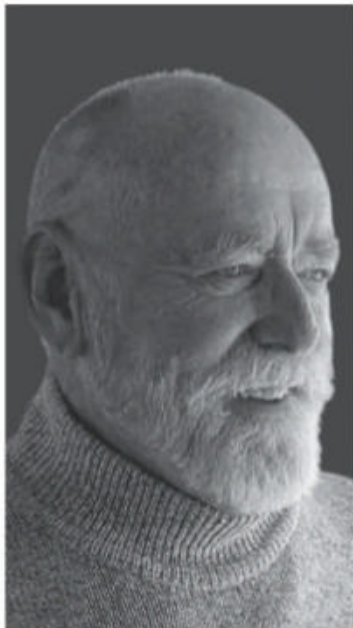
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One might

say that it was

the Model T

of its day, and

that was no

coincidence.



## Thinking Small

I want to get something off my chest. I may lose a few friends over this, but I will feel a lot better if I tell you. You see, I am a little—well—different.

Okay . . . I'll just say it. I was never into muscle cars. Back when everyone wanted big and fast, I settled for small and slow. When my friends bought GTOs and Corvettes, I bought a 1966 Volkswagen "Beetle." Why? Well, mostly because I was married, had three kids, and was a man of meager means.

Granted, the peculiar vehicle branded me as a one-world, vegetarian Esperanto speaker, but that little car cost me a fraction of what it did to operate my previous Pontiac. Soon, I was getting 25 miles to the gallon, and tires were lasting 40,000 miles, and I had a car that was simple to work on—though it seldom needed anything other than the usual lube and oil, tune-up, and valve adjustment.

My 1966 VW Type 1 looked like the refugee from 1937 that it was. It had bolt-on fat fenders, running boards, and headlamps that were bulbs and lenses like those typical in the U.S. before 1940 when Seal Beams were invented. It also had a 6-volt electrical system with the battery under the back seat.

The Lilliputian machine actually looked like a miniature 1934 Chrysler Airflow, complete with its rounded front end, tapered rear, and even a split back window on the earlier models. Also, it had a tiny clattery air-cooled four-cylinder aluminum engine in the rear. It was the antithesis of contemporary styling and status. It took me completely out of the game of keeping up with the Joneses.

It was my first new car. I went on to own and restore three more Beetles later because they were cheap, and I liked the twitchy handling. Granted, going over a mountain pass meant sitting behind 18-wheelers in the slow lane, but on level ground you could run flat out at 70 mph all day, which is about as fast as you can go legally anyway.

I also discovered that you could draft 18-wheelers and get 32 miles to the gallon. You simply pulled steadily up to the back of the truck, and as you got closer you would hit turbulence. But if you pressed on, you could push through to still air and ease off the throttle.

The VW Beetle, while not an American car,

was certainly a part of America in its day. In fact, it was part of the world automotive scene in the '60s. Bugs infested nearly every country on earth. Factories were built in Brazil, South Africa, and Mexico, in addition to the original in Wolfsburg in Germany, and almost every country had dealerships.

By the time the last Beetle came off the assembly line in Puebla, Mexico, in 2003,

21,529,464 of them had been built, making it the most successful single-platform car ever; eclipsing Ford's Model T production at a bit more than 15 million. One might say that it was the Model T of its day, and that was no coincidence.

Der Führer was an admirer of Henry Ford, and even had a portrait of him in his office at the

Reichstag. And he wanted a car for Germany like the Model T that was affordable for the working class. He put Ferdinand Porsche on the project. The specifications that were given seemed impossible, because they stipulated that the car had to be able to transport two adults and three children at 62 mph and get 32 mpg.

The prototype debuted in 1937, but only 200 were built before World War II. After the war, the bombed-out plant was offered to the Ford Motor Co. for free, but they turned it down. In the end, the British got production going, and the rest is history. The design was improved and updated but never changed. Its utter simplicity and ingenious engineering was so extraordinary that it continued for an amazing 65 years!

I've always loved old cars, and the 1960s-era Volkswagen Beetles were old even when they were new. The design was ancient, but it filled a niche for cheap, reliable transportation. Today's cars are more costly, complex, and difficult to maintain. Yes, they can tell you where you are going, and they will tell you if your tire pressure is low, but they don't have that simple, durability that the Ford Model T or the VW Beetle had.

I sold my last Bug a couple of years ago—a 1970 model that I restored in the 1990s—that I used as a grocery getter in New Zealand, and I miss it. It took me where I wanted to go, it was fun to drive, and parts for it cost next to nothing. Granted, it was a little noisy, and passing cars would buffet me around, but it never let me down. 🐞





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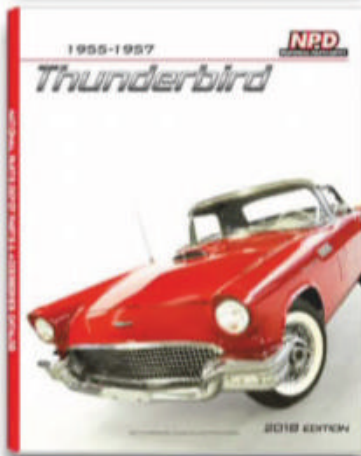
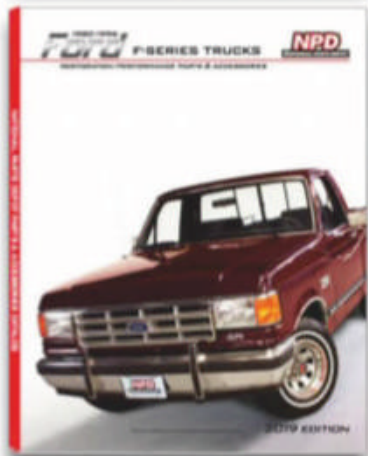
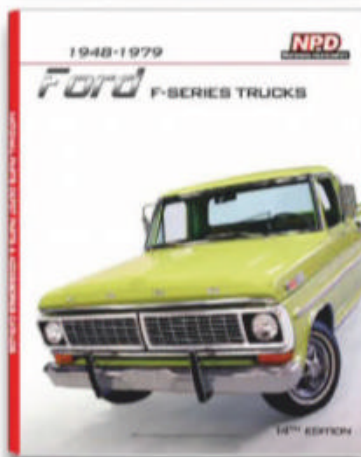
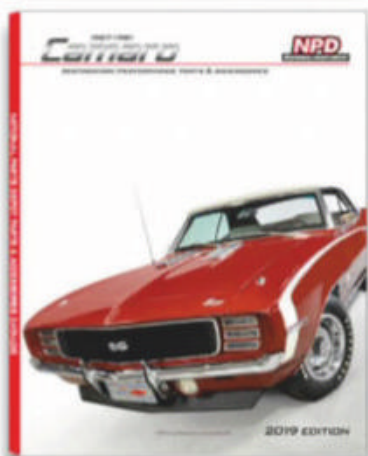
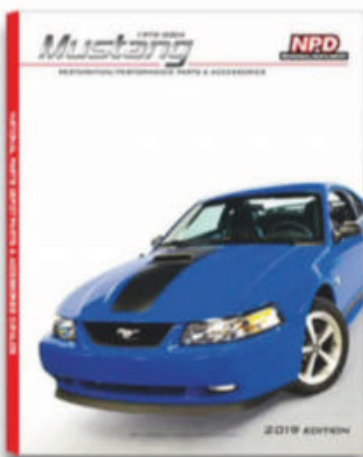


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